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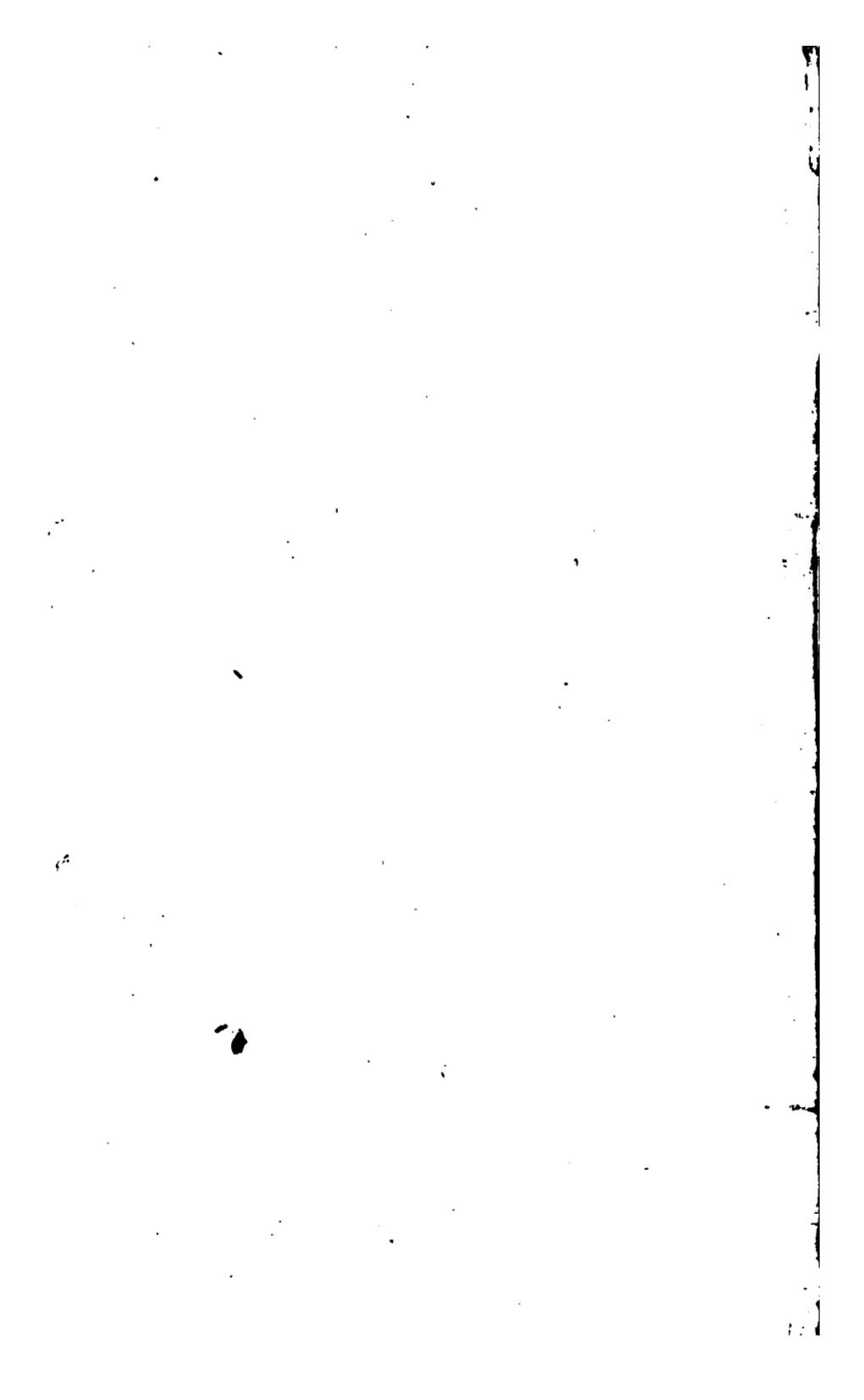
Volume I.

Marianne's Vest

given to her by her
Grandmother

March 1820

J. F.







PNEUMANEE.



PNEUMANEE;

OR,

THE FAIRY

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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ADDRESS

TO

THE READER.



THE Reader owes the publication of these Volumes to the following circumstance:—Waiting in a fine summer's morning in the library of a friend, who was not quite ready to pursue a journey, concerted but the previous evening; I glanced my eye over a quarto volume, that said nothing for itself, not a single letter to gratify curiosity: this but the more excited mine: after brushing off some

some dust, that, from its secluded corner, had escaped observation, I was eager to see its contents ; and in a neat and legible female hand, I found it an interesting family-history, and anxiously obtained my friend's consent to add it to the volumes already packed in the carriage. I protested I could not go without it ; and I was rewarded for my obstinacy, by the great amusement it gave to many of our reading hours. The character of the writer was well known to my friend, as a relation of his own ; but whether Pneumanee was only an interesting female, whose beauty, virtues, and talents, endeared her to the Parsonage, or what other claims she might have to supernatural endowments, can only be revealed at her own time

time and place. I obtained permission to publish the first half of the volume, which is quite distinct from the latter, upon condition that I omitted names and dates, for fear of giving pain, and as many of the nursery scenes and anecdotes as I chose, but with an express promise not to add one single syllable of my own : at the same time my friend assured me, that volumes without "hair-breadth 'scapes and *'dire chimeras'*" would never suit the public taste. But, as nothing is said to contribute more to propriety than remarks upon those who have excelled, I have no hesitation in recommending this family-history to every breakfast and tea table in Great Britain ; confident that the unadorned simplicity of the style, the truth and

nature

nature of the village-life it unfolds, will give unaffected pleasure to my readers, who will sympathise with the anxiety of parents to train their families to the love of truth, order, and propriety. I have to apologise for sudden interruptions in the style, occasioned by leaving out local circumstances that might be tedious to the reader, who, if he feels but a small proportion of my attachment to the family at the Parsonage, will earnestly wish to see the remaining part of the volume, written chiefly by Lucy in different scenes of life.

I am the Reader's
obliged and obedient,
THE TRANSCRIBER.

PNEUMANEE.

IT was a most lovely tranquil evening in August, when the wife of a pious good clergyman, with an old nurse and two of her youngest children, were walking by the sea-side near a village in Devonshire. Pneumanee, a young and lovely female, with a spirited and graceful air, passed calmly by her. The Rector's wife, struck with her interesting appearance, accosted her, supposed she was a stran-

ger, and begged to know if she, who had lived some years in the village, could be useful to her? The evening, fine as it was, would soon close in, and they were at a considerable distance from any house but the Parsonage, which was immediately behind the nearest wood. Pneumanee thanked her with elegance and ease; and after an interchange of civilities, it was settled she should that night accept the best accommodations to be had at the Parsonage-house, and leading one of the little ones through the wood, it was not long before they reached it. Deeply sheltered from the north winds by lofty trees, you came close upon its little enclosure before you saw it. The house was lowly built, but had a long front to a lawn, surrounded with borders of shrubs and flowers; every thing about it was moderate, pleasing in its proportions, simple in its taste, and

and seemed the certain abode of content and cheerfulness. A lovely girl about fifteen was watering a bed of roses, her frock pinned up, a simple straw hat carelessly covering her flowing hair: she flew over to kiss the little ones as they entered the wicket, and started at seeing so fine a lady: her sister, younger than herself, was propping some nasturchions, that, she said, she wished should live a little longer; she too ran over to kiss the children, and welcome the stranger. Pneumanee took them both by the hand, and was led to the house, where she was introduced to the Rector, whom she soon discovered to be a clergyman without pride or guile: she was delighted with all she saw, particularly with the two lovely girls, who seemed to dwell with the most marked attention upon every thing she said. No sooner had they taken their

leave for the night, than Pneumanee revealed to their parents the superiority of her nature, as far as it concerned them to know. The time would come when she would more fully explain it to them ; but, as she assured them she should exert her powers and pre-eminence only to increase the comforts and happiness of the amiable and afflicted, they would have nothing to apprehend. She did not wish to make a parade of her advantages ; for if they were well understood, society would shrink from her, and she would naturally lose the power of correcting its abuses ; and if she passed as a mere mortal, her personal advantages might subject her to insults, which, however unavailing to injure her, would lessen her in own esteem. She would consent that her name should convey the idea of a fairy in the nursery, if the children could divest themselves of the fear of a high-

a high-crowned hat and a broom-stick, to the dignity of which she could have no pretensions. She was so pleasing in her conversation, so interesting in her manner, and so refined in her whole deportment, that both the Rector and his wife foresaw innumerable advantages to themselves and their children from her precepts and example, and anxiously hoped she would continue her partiality for a family whose best exertions should be employed to secure her esteem. She had fixed her mind upon that subject, she said ; she wished to be treated as one of the family, who would go and return without restraint ; and she felt confident she should never repent the choice she had made, and equally certain they would never wish her to make any other.

It was so new to the Rector and his wife, when they retired to their apartment,

ment, after Pneumancee was introduced to hers, that they were some minutes before they spoke to each other, and then they knew not what to say. A fairy in such a lovely form! how could it be? But yet so lovely, so endearing! what signified under what description so much beauty and virtue chose to veil itself? they were sure to enjoy, and benefit greatly by, her society. The next morning the children were told that Pneumancee was a fairy, who was come to live with them, but would occasionally leave them for other society she might prefer.

Astonishment and fear appeared in every face, and one ventured to express, what every one thought, that they should never be happy a moment while she staid. Why, she might come into their very rooms when they were asleep, and they never find it out! she might know their very thoughts,

thoughts, and what a sad thing that might be!

" You have been accustomed to hear, and I hope never to forget," said their mother, " that an eye that never slumbers or sleeps, is for ever about your path and your bed ; and under his immediate and all-powerful protection, you can have nothing to fear : he never forsakes those who trust in him. But how lovely and how kind Pneumanee was in herself ! her society would be the first of blessings ; she would communicate a thousand sources of enjoyment from her universal knowledge of human life, and, like a second conscience, in the shape of a lovely friend, would more than whisper when they were inclined to err, and still more loudly approve when they acted right." This was all very true, the eldest daughter said ; and the little ones, from her example,
were

were soon convinced she would not start up in hideous forms, as old-fashioned fairies had done, to frighten those they did not wish to please. But when they went to bed the following night, they carefully looked round every curtain and corner of the room; not yet reconciled to a character so new and so alarming. The two eldest daughters were much sooner reconciled to their lovely guest. There was something alarming, no doubt, that she could enter into their very thoughts, and become invisible whenever she pleased; but as she did not appear to use those privileges but with the best discretion, and was in herself so engaging that it was impossible not to love her, they resolved to consider her, next to their parents, their best and dearest friend.

Pneumanee entered into all the business and amusements of the family; visited the poor with them,
assisted

assisted in their working and reading parties, joined in their morning and evening devotions, amused them with anecdotes of various scenes and characters, that shewed such a perfect knowledge of human life in all its varieties, that their admiration and esteem was universal and unbounded. Every eye looked up to hers, and every heart was devoted to her. Aided by her power and influence, the Parsonage became a new scene of hilarity and joy—every hour grew interesting. The younger children no longer gradually went in alarm from her knee, but seized every opportunity to run to caress her, and they all now “wondered they could ever be so foolish as to be afraid.” After a few weeks spent in securing the entire affection of every individual of the family, Pneumanee, one morning after breakfast, would leave them, she said, for a few days; and when she

returned would give them some account of her visits. A thousand fears were now expressed that she might never return, that she might find another Parsonage she would prefer to theirs, and many exclamations followed, of what they could do without her ! “ How will you go, Madam ? ” said the eldest boy. “ My usual way, my dear boy,” said Pneumanee ; “ and I am sure you do not forget, ‘ that spirits, in their essence pure, can in what shape they please, their airy purpose execute, and works of love or enmity fulfil.’ ” Charles smiled, and Pneumanee took her leave.

The days now passed slowly on, the regular occupations of the family went on as before. History was read as usual ; but Pneumanee was not present to enliven its frequent dulness. Maps were studied ; but who could so well describe the various customs and manners

mers of the natives of every climate? Their walks in the country were the same as usual; but where was Pneumanee's happy facility of blending instruction with all their amusements? Learning with her had lost all appearance of solemnity; her playfulness of manner infused a certain cheer of mind to all around her, and she took occasion, from every object and every circumstance, to enlarge their understandings and improve their hearts, while she amused their fancy and cultivated a gaiety of manner that diffused itself over all their words and actions, and made them universally admired and beloved.

Every day found fresh subjects of regret for Pneumanee's absence, and fresh expressions of impatience for her return.

Before the warm interest in her favour felt a moment's decrease, before
a single

a single spark of affection had died away, with the same angelic form, the same lovely countenance, and bright elastic air of youth and joy, she returned to the Parsonage. All was joy and gladness ; she gave a new stimulus to the duties and exertions of the day ; and as they took their evening walk by the sea, they had much to say, and more to inquire. The winds seemed laid to sleep, and the waves curled with a gentle murmur upon the beach, in a pleasing succession of sounds, that Charles protested had never before been so grateful to his ear ; it had never been so pleasing while Pneumanee was absent. She was aware of that, she said ; and for a compliment so gratifying to Neptune's civility and her influence, Charles should command a history of some of the time she had spent in her absence,

when

when they returned to tea. As soon as they finished their saunter on the beach, Charles claimed the promise, and Pneumanee said, her first visit was to a worthy couple whom she had long known ; they were amiable, and had lived with great comfort upon a moderate income, very much respected and beloved in their neighbourhood ; they had lately very large property unexpectedly left them, and their good sense was actually perverted, if not destroyed by it.

The gentleman had purchased a house much too large for his family to occupy ; he had furnished it with most unbounded expense, had more carriages and horses than he could use ; servants he knew not how to employ, and were the torment of his life ; and was continually lamenting that the distance from the offices was so great, and it was so long before the servants

servants came to the bell, that he was always obliged to wait upon himself. Then came a sigh and an ardent wish for his former contracted mansion, where every thing was under his eye and within his reach; with a just eulogium on the wisdom of Solomon, who had long since discovered that in great riches was great vexation.

The good lady his wife was entirely occupied in pinning up her curtains, covering her sofas, dusting the lustres, and shutting out the sun from the best rooms; opening the window-shutters only to shew the size of the large glasses, and the colour of the damask, for the rooms themselves had never been used. She complained that they had lost all their acquaintance, and found few others but those who came to see the house; and she was so tired of telling them what every thing had cost, that she was making an accurate inventory

inventory of it, and would have a copy placed in every show-room.

Here was a general laugh, which Charles, the eldest boy, could not keep within due bounds. "God bless the woman!" he exclaimed, "who cares what her things cost? did she mean to mortify the poor, or ingratiate herself with the rich?"

"What could you say to her, my dear Madam?" said Fanny, the eldest girl. "It is an awkward thing, my dear girl, to tell people they are acting foolishly; the human heart is so attached to its own foibles, that no advice is welcome that would expose them to the eye of Reason, or the smile of Contempt."

"The proper management of great wealth is very difficult to those who have been bred up with contracted habits; but when the intoxication from such unexpected riches is worn

off, I trust their natural good sense will return. At present there is such a mixture of penury and profusion, that it would be a task indeed to attempt any sort of regulation in their establishment. They repeatedly consulted me about what they should do to acquire the respectability of character to which they were entitled from their wealth, and to give the world a proper idea of its magnitude. I recommended an establishment consistent in all its parts, making comfort, rather than parade, their grand object ; to omit no opportunity of assisting the distressed. They would be known by these means to the valuable part of society, who were not to be dazzled by splendid furniture ; who saw no merit in laced liveries, grand fêtes, or services of plate ; who valued no man's merit by the number of his horses, or the rent-roll of his estates, but would respect and value such

such a generous use of talents so bountifully bestowed, and be proud to reckon them among their estimable friends.

"The consciousness of deserving the blessings of the distressed would chase *ennui* from their private hours, give a glow to their feelings, and breathe around them an incense, that, like the vivifying rays of the sun, would brighten, warm, and invigorate wherever it shone."

"Surely," said Charles, "they began immediately to alter their plan : did the lady not open her window-shutters immediately, and give her lustres to the care of the house-maid?"
— "Recollect, Charles, the strong force of habit upon the mind ; to act greatly, you must be accustomed to think so too ; and those who have been accustomed to value trifles, cannot easily forsake them for great objects or great events.

events. My friends were greatly obliged by my advice ; but upon only one footman attending the door, as I left it, the butler was severely reprimanded for not having a *second* to attend to such a necessary part of his duty, and in the same breath reminded that he was not to tread upon the milk-white rug at the door, that had actually cost a guinea."

"I am afraid," said Charles, laughing, "the lady at least is incurable."—
"O," said Fanny, "I hope they will rise or fall together; for if one only should reform, they would never respect each other." Pneumanee had hopes that all she had said would have great weight, and that upon her next visit she should easily discover the good effects of it. She went from thence, she said, to a very different scene, to some highly valued friends, whom she found in the deepest distress :

tress : their beloved and only child had eloped with an officer, whose character they entirely disapproved. She had left a letter to beg forgiveness, to say all pursuit would be vain ; that she should be married immediately upon her arrival in Scotland, and would soon return to claim their blessing, and bring to them a son equally deserving of the great indulgence she had ever experienced from parents so beloved.

"Never did I see," continued Pneumanee, "such agonizing distress : the child who, from her birth, had been the object of all their hopes and wishes, the constant theme of their gratitude to Heaven, the unremitting subject of their pride and joy ; whose every wish had been anticipated, who was a part of their very existence, and mingled with every pulsation of their hearts---that such a child, so gifted

by

by Nature, so carefully educated, so blessed with fortune, and so adored by her parents—that such a child, in the most important act of her life, should throw off all sense of affection and obedience, and wilfully stab them so cruelly to the heart, could not be true—they could not believe it. The man, a vain and frivolous coxcomb, so likely to reproach her for the very act that would unite with her parents' unutterable sorrow her own future misery—it was too much to bear. They enumerated a thousand pleasant traits of her infancy, a thousand endearing expressions and circumstances, that, having often repeated with transport, and hoarded up as the most darling treasure they possessed, would now be remembered with agonizing groans and the bitterest tears of unavailing grief. The father's manly spirit forsook him upon this reflection;

reflection ; he fell upon his knees, imploring the assistance of the Almighty to prevent him from cursing the author of his misery ; the mother, in speechless agony, knelt by his side."

Pneumanee paused as if overcome by the recollection of the scene ; all were silent, till sobs stole upon the ear from the elder part of the audience, who sympathised in the misery of grief so sincere, and a loud cry from the younger, because their sisters were shedding tears.

" A sad scene indeed," repeated Pneumanee ; " so many years of past happiness blasted, to gratify a selfish man, who would sacrifice the peace of a heart so young and unsuspecting, and, setting aside the sacred claims of filial duty, lay up remorse and sorrow for every hour of her future life."—" I hope, my dear Madam," said Fanny, " that you found some subject

subject for their comfort, some alleviation to their misery?"—"Alas, my dear, their comfort depended upon their darling child, and she had effectually destroyed it. It would have been no balsam to the wound to hear how severe would be her punishment. The enchanting smiles and early endearments of her first infant will unfold infinitely distressing pangs to her feeling heart; the exquisite enjoyment of feelings so new and so delightful will be embittered by the consciousness of her own ingratitude. Such was my mother's joy, her heart will whisper, such her raptures at the dawnings of my infant reason, and where is her reward? where are her expectations flown? The father of her infant may, long before that period, have taught her what a wretched exchange she has made from her parental roof to the careless and unfeeling protection of his."

his." Charles expressed his sorrow, and Fanny most sincerely lamented the poor young lady's indiscretion. " You would grieve for her indeed," said Pneumanee, " if you could judge of the gloom that her conscious failure of duty will throw over the pleasing solicitudes and anticipating delights of a fond mother's heart."

Pneumanee, aware that any other subject might weaken the impression she evidently had made, continued some comments upon it, and joined in their remarks with the same good sense and good humour she never ceased to display upon all occasions. Enlightened minds easily conceive how interesting every subject of conversation becomes, where vivacity and good humour, governed by discretion and good sense, take the lead, but cannot be understood by those who require riot

riot or frolic or fun to pass away their hours.

As it was settled the preceding evening, that early hours increased the beauty of youth, the health of the body, and improved the faculties of the mind, our young party were up and breakfasted earlier than usual; and having lost every idea of fear, connected with the fairy character of their guest, they hung round her, kissed her hands, her lips and forehead; and the youngest girl, not reaching to those high distinctions, caught up her glove that lay upon the table, and eagerly pressed it to her lips. Pneumanee felt the kindness, and kissed away the blushes that mantled upon the little creature's cheek when she saw herself observed. It was a fine clear autumnal morning; a spirit of health and "joy was felt in every breeze,

breeze, and diffused with the sun upon every herb, tree, fruit, and flower glittering with dew ;” and when they returned from their walk, with increased animation and delight they went to their various pursuits. As they travelled over the maps of India, Pneumanee gave them an accurate account of the Hindoos, their various habits and customs, their scrupulous attention to their religious ceremonies, and the dreadful state of degradation to those who violate the laws of their cast. It is impossible to express the sensation of vileness it conveys to a Hindoo mind. The entire loss of all human comfort is a poor expression of it : water is defiled by even their shadow passing over it. Charles asked how it would be possible to convert such a nation, so numerous and so bigoted, to Christianity ?—“ Not by missionaries ; it must be effected by

the exemplary conduct of the Christians themselves ; and as churches are now building in India, we may hope that the purity of the worship, and the corresponding propriety of Christian duties, will in time excite their admiration, and open their eyes to the truth of the Gospel."—" But that will be so long about."—" It *may*," replied Pneumanee ; " but as we know not in what period of the prophecy we stand, ' When by all the nations of the earth from the rising up of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name shall be glorified,' we are not able to judge how near or how distant the fulfilment may be. An unprejudiced mind," she added, " is the result of long observation, of great docility and benevolence ; even you, my dear Charles, preferred an English fisherman the other day before an American, who was a stronger object of your compassion,

from

from a prejudice such a mind as yours should carefully discard. We have all one common Father, our claims to his mercy depend upon our charity ; and if we ought not to be indifferent, and cannot be blind to the pre-eminence of our own country, we should be indulgent and compassionate to those of less favoured nations."—"I am quite ashamed of myself," Charles replied with his usual candour ; " I shall take care that never happens again." Fanny asked Pneumanee, if she had ever witnessed a Hindoo woman's burning with her husband ? " O yes, and my heart bleeds at the recollection. She was a young and very interesting, I had almost said' very handsome creature. The pile was raised in a little sequestered spot near the Ganges, surrounded by high trees. I shall never forget the composed firmness with which she stepped out of the palanquin, and stood

to look at the corpse of her husband, already laid upon the awful pile—she appeared eager to ascend it; and after distributing her ornaments to her female friends, and sweetmeats and rice given her for the purpose upon the spot, she lay down, assisted by her father; combustibles and light wood were added; the father, with an averted face, lighted the pile in several places. I will spare you farther details; it is too distressing for description."

"Was there no person," said Charles,
"who would risk his life to save her?"
—"O no, because it would have been more cruel than the dreadful agonies of such a death, to have survived such a pollution; she would have lost cast, and would have been sunk to the lowest degradation of human nature."
—"How happy we are," said Fanny,
"to have been born Christians. The Jewish

Jewish ceremonies are many and burdensome, the places of their worship fixed and inconvenient; Mahomet's disciples have great deprivations, and great attentions to pay to his tomb, which must be a long journey for his followers."—"Go on, my dear," said Pneumanee, "and remark with delight, that the pure heart and upright spirit of a Christian is in all places, from the rising to the setting sun, the temple of his God."

As Pneumanee had mentioned, in the course of the day, that she had lately been in a very crowded assembly in London, Fanny requested, in the evening, as they were sitting round their work-table, that she would give them some idea of what such an assembly was composed. "I shall most certainly never see one," she said; "and your description will be most gratifying to me."—"You will find it
very

very dull, my dear Fanny ; for most of its pleasantry depends upon knowing most of the parties, having an interest in their concerns, hearing the fashionable topics of the day, delighting in a squeeze, hearing a constant rapping at the door, and fresh visitors announced ; whilst the staircase is so full of some parties coming up, and others going down, that you are in great luck if you reach the drawing-room, or see the lady of the house for the whole evening. Sometimes indeed your carriage cannot get up, for you to get a sight of the door ; and if you have not courage to dip under the necks of horses, to encounter numbers of rude footmen, the bustle of coachmen, and the unnecessary whipping-on and pulling-up of their horses, and all the mud that may be in your way, you have a good chance of composing your nerves to such scenes for some hours ; for it would

would be equally impossible to return as it would be to go on : but upon ordinary occasions, and at this season of the year, assemblies are not so crowded, or beyond the management of Bow-Street officers, who attend at the doors to regulate any confusion or disorder that may arise." — " How strange, and how new," said Fanny, " to me ! " — " I dined in a large party of gentlemen," continued Pneumanee, " at a lady's house, where I am always secure of an affectionate welcome ; her husband is an excellent man, and you are sure to meet at his table good company and good taste. As I entered the room, I heard a gentleman, in a whisper not meant to be heard, ask, who I was ? — ' Some country Miss,' was replied, ' by her neck being covered so well with lace.' — ' I have a high idea of the delicacy of her mind,' was rejoined ; for he never could understand what pretensions

pretensions young ladies could have to proper feelings of decorum, who could violate it so egregiously in their appearance." Here Fanny begged to know what was the fashion alluded to, and heard with great surprise, that ladies of all ages were seen in public without the protection of lace to guard them from the rude eye and sarcastic remarks that would make a young lady, bred up with care in the country, quite shudder to think of. "I sat by one of those gentlemen at dinner, who, having settled in himself that I was fresh from the country, and, as the London world are pleased to think, of course extremely simple, he was very frequent and liberal of his encomiums upon my person, and seemed much to wonder that I was not elated with his opinions. I sat eating my dinner with marked indifference, with only a returning smile to

to the lady of the house, who was much amused by the gentleman's assiduity. Provoked at last with my inattention, he swore, in a whisper, that he believed I was the most insensible beauty upon earth ; and he was thinking, if I was not handsome, what I should be.—‘ And if your Lordship will allow me the same privilege, I will endeavour to discover what you would be if you were not a Lord.’ He drew up with a sort of start, as if it was impossible that the character of a gentleman was not very prominent in his appearance. Indeed it really was, and I smiled as if I knew it to be so ; he recollect ed himself with great ease, and said, He must ever have been one of my greatest admirers—‘ And I must always have been insensible to the distinction, You see, my Lord, the respect I pay to your penetration ; you thought me insensible, and I have

'done myself the justice, and you the credit, to confirm your judgment.'—Strange indeed, he replied, to convince him so indelibly that he had no judgment at all.—With such trifling chat, and various subjects of conversation, kept up with great vivacity and spirit by gentlemen of the party, the dinner hours passed away. The drawing-room soon began to fill ; the ladies all dressed in the fashionable extreme. I lamented that so many young and lovely women should expose themselves to such sarcastic remarks, and am greatly at a loss to guess how their mothers can be indifferent to the public opinion, which has been so strongly and repeatedly pressed upon their view.

The conversation now became rather a tumult of voices—supported in some parts of the room with wit and vivacity, in others a mere catalogue of fashions,

fashions, parties, and beaux — some gentlemen had danced *divinely* at the ball last night, others had most *angelic* eye-brows— innumerable matches were about to take place, and those who were accurate in the names of the parties had infinite advantage over their acquaintance. Many young ladies appeared sullen and disconcerted, and went to the glass again and again to new-adjust a curl that had failed in its effect to please, and still farther to hold up a head that had shrunk down, for warmth and shelter, to clothes now got too high for fashionable exposure. The gentlemen who had not too many engagements for the remainder of the evening, returned to the drawing-room; the gloom disappeared, a universal smile prevailed, and the ladies seemed quite rejoiced at the change so visible in every part of the room. I drew a pretty-

pretty shy girl by me on a sofa, who seemed in considerable alarm; she was surprised at the confused uproar of voices, at the ease and freedom of the ladies' manners—told me it was her first appearance in London, and she was really afraid every body in the room would find it out, she felt so unlike all the young ladies she saw, who seemed to know and talk to every body: she begged me not to laugh at her, but she was quite ashamed to see the ladies so undressed. She was astonished to see a young lady play and sing in so large a party without embarrassment, and declared she should exquisitely suffer if such a proposal was made to her. How enviable, she said, was such self-possession! I assured her that all she had said had raised her in my esteem; that with the self-possession she seemed so much to over-value, ladies lost much of the

sweet

sweet modest air that in youth was so captivating ; the frequent display of their persons in crowded assemblies, and the ease and affability of Town manners so gained, was but a wretched substitute for it."—"I like that young lady very much," said Fanny ; "but pray go on, my dear Pneumaee ; for I am quite in the party, and shall be very sorry when it breaks up."

" At this moment Lord C. came up with a gay air, and said he would forgive all my cruelties at dinner, if I would make room for him upon the sofa. My little protégée was starting up to give him her place ; but her aunt was at the card table, and I would by no means part with her.—'A sad preliminary of peace,' he said : but drawing a chair near us, and being an adept in the art of quizzing, he let no person in the room escape his remarks.

remarks. Some of the company were too fat to please his taste, others too thin, many too old, many more too ugly ; some had the crime of being married, others the guilt of being single ; and as the latter part of the community are the most helpless and most unprotected, they are ever the grand objects over whom half-witted and half-bred men exultingly triumph."

This was quite new to Fanny ; she could not conceive what in a single life could be contemptible : this Pneumanee must tell her another time, for she would not interrupt her now for any thing. "A general murmur of applause, of 'how affable, and how witty !' from the ladies round him, could not escape his Lordship's ear: 'I entertain every body but you,' he said, leaning forward ; 'and you are the only person I wish to amuse.'—'If I was quite perfect'—'What then,' he said,

said—‘ Then I should be too generous to triumph in the imperfections of others.’—‘ You shall not be perfect,’ he exclaimed; ‘ we will take you as you are’—‘ Then as I am, my Lord, I can have no right to laugh; for I have imperfections of my own.’—‘ I am too much of an Englishman,’ he said, ‘ not to feel the full force of your remark, and I will own that if all women were like you, we should be driven to other subjects for merriment.’—‘ If ladies were accustomed to hear good sense from the gentlemen, they would rejoice to get information and anecdote from so pleasing a source, and cease to be frivolous and vain.’—‘ From what happy valley,’ said his Lordship, ‘ are you emerged?’—‘ Not from Abyssinia, my Lord; nor have I had the high advantages of an Immac to guide me; but I hope it is not necessary to go out of Great Britain,

to



to find a general indulgence for the imperfections of others, while we must be so conscious of the innumerable sources of our own.'—You must be already tired," said Pneumanee, "of a visit so dull in the detail; it would be endless to mention the nothingness that passes in such an evening. I took my little friend under my arm; and walking through the rooms, told her many anecdotes of people who were little aware of the intimacy of my acquaintance, and I did not immediately recollect that she would feel still less fit for London, than she did before, if ladies knew so much about each other as I did." Fanny was delighted with all she heard, and was confident she enjoyed it better than if she had been present, while Charles thought his Lordship could not be a very well-bred man to laugh at any body that was present.

It

It was now Saturday evening, and the children all tripped away to fetch the work they had done for the poor in the preceding week. Fanny brought two frocks she had made ; the gay-hearted Lucy had made caps, which she proudly displayed, and valued her first-made bed-gown very highly, till she discovered that one of the sleeves was the wrong side out ; tears started into her eyes at the discovery, but soon sunk away, and with a ready smile she said to Charles, " I am sure I should have cried about this, if I had never heard of that dear burnt Hindoo ; now it would be a shame, and I will not mind it." They all took some presents to the village, and came home delighted with the pleasure they had communicated, and drank their tea with increased relish from the freshness of the air and the benefit of the walk. The Rector reminded them, " That the week, and
all

all its blessings and labours, were at an end ; irretrievably registered, never to be recalled. Happy were those who could look back, and say it had been well spent ; happy indeed were those who had time still before them to spend the next better, if they discovered but little to commend in the last ; and inexpressibly happy and grateful should those be, who found all their blessings and comforts still around them, when, in the natural state of human affairs, changes and sorrows were a constituent part of it. We have now in prospect a grateful day of thankfulness and joy, in a sort of communion with our Creator, that secures our reverence and excites our adoration ; a day of rest, that, by divine compassion, is extended even to the beasts of the field. We all have leisure, on that day, to contemplate the transcendent goodness every where around

around us, the purposes for which we were designed, and the stupendous prospects before us; for this world, and all its beauties and all its sublimities, must pass away. But remember, Lucy, for her eye moistened with a tear, that a cheerful enjoyment of all the blessings given us, is the best and most grateful sacrifice we can offer to the Almighty Disposer of all events, to the Omnipotent Creator of all that is great and good in the world." — " How much I wish, papa," said Lucy, " that God Almighty had been so good as to make the world to last for ever. I like it so much, and it is every where so good and so beautiful, that I do not wish for a better." — " I hope, my dear girl, you will long see it in the same cheering point of view; it is every where good and every where most beautiful, but the human heart is grown corrupt in it,

it, so that the Almighty repented him that he had made man, and destroyed it almost entirely, you know, by the flood : men continued still unworthy, and I trust you are well aware of the atonement, great and astonishing as it is to conceive, that in his wisdom and mercy the Omnipotent God accepted for us all."—"O yes, papa, and I have long seen it must be true, because nobody else could have found out such a scheme."—"And cannot you depend upon the same wisdom for another and better world, which has been promised to all who believe in his word and fulfil his laws, where there shall be no tears and no sorrows, and never shall have any termination?"—"O," said Charles, "how hard it is to conceive ! I wish we were sure of all meeting together ; but I fear it is impossible, that we should see each other in the same persons after being reduced

reduced to dust."—"It is weak," the Rector said, "to be wearying your imaginations with things purposely concealed from human knowledge, we must rely upon a word that cannot fail, upon assurances that can never deceive us, that there are blessings in store for us beyond our conceptions, if we steadily believe in the wisdom and goodness of God, in the atonement made by his Son for our sins, and walk in the laws which he has set before us."—"It seems to be very easy terms," said Lucy, "and every body must think so." Pneumanee and Fanny smiled. "We must remember," continued the Rector, "to keep the Sabbath holy; there is nothing more insisted upon by the Prophets, who wrote from inspiration; and while we make it a day of thankfulness and joy, we must not forget that it must be also a day for holy worship, and grateful

ful remembrance of the past blessings.—“ Must I put away my new doll,” said one of the little ones, putting both hands upon the Rector’s knee.
—“ You want no rest, my dear,” taking both her hands, “ because you have no labour; and as you have no other means of recollecting the importance of the day, but by changing your customary pursuits, and it is greatly to be wished that you should early acquire a high veneration for a day so appointed by the Creator himself, the doll had better be put aside till Monday.” She instantly put it by, innocently wishing that Monday was already come.

After a long absence Pneumanee returned, blooming in beauty ; her bright blue eyes, shaded with long black eye-lashes, gave an inexpressible character of mild intelligence to her countenance ; her mouth, varying with dimples,

dimples, implied a ready smile, and gave a pleasing security that she would willingly communicate happiness to all within her reach; her complexion, fresh as youth and bloom could make it; elasticity in her air, and sparkling joy in her eye, her mild and musical voice broke in rapture upon Fanny's ear, as she sat reading in the window: she started with delight, threw down her volume, and flew to meet her. Pneumanee, dressed in pale celestial blue, with drapery of the thinnest muslin fancifully flowing in graceful ease over her figure (without concealing its symmetry); a sprig of heath twisted in her lovely hair, she appeared more than usually charming; she met the cordial welcome of the whole party; again and again caressed, it was some time before their transports would allow her a moment's interval: such reiterated inquiries of "How she did,
and

and where she had been?" left her no time for reply. Charles declared they valued her the more every time she returned. "Was that a hint to send her away again?"—"Oh no; for she would be in danger of being killed with caresses if she absented herself again."—"Facetious fellow!" she called him; said she had brought him a microscope to keep his active spirit quiet for some time in each day, and to make him acquainted with a new world of wonders. "You are all so happy, and placed so exactly in that happy medium of life, where, exempt from the allurements and dazzling temptations of great wealth, and equally protected from the embarrassments, deprivations, and horrors of poverty; in such a state where human felicity, *if ever*, is to be found. I would not have you richer than you are; yet, as it is particularly pleasant to receive proofs

proofs of affection and remembrance, I have ordered a little trunk a-piece, that I hope will give you great pleasure. I wish it could be as much as I had in choosing them; but experience has fully taught me that it is *more pleasant*, as well as *more blessed*, to give than to receive. I hope they will be here very soon; meantime we will take a walk upon the beach, and see, as Charles says, what Neptune will present upon the surface of his waters to-day."—"A stormy character, I suspect," said Charles, "if he is interested for me; for I am so anxious about my little present, that I can think of nothing else." Fanny was at a loss to guess whether the *pleasure* of expectation might not really be considered as a mild species of misery; Lucy skipped about, with a frolicsome air, guessing the probable contents of her dear expected trunk.

As the evening came on before the presents arrived, to pass away the tedious moments, Pneumance proposed to tell them of a visit she had paid to a new-married couple, who were so violently attached to each other, that, in opposition to the wishes of the families on both sides, they would not wait for the tedious lawyers, but were married before the settlements were finished. Contradiction, on the lady's part, was apt to bring on hysterics—*she never could bear it*—there was no other man in the universe she could like for a husband ; and if she did not marry him, she should be distracted. Her fond mother, accustomed to watch every direction of her eye, and to anticipate every wish of her heart, entered into all her apprehensions ; and well knowing that gentlemen can change their minds, and dreading the completion of the threatened distraction,

tion, hurried through all the previous ceremonies, and the marriage was solemnized."—"And so they lived very happy ever afterwards," said Charles. "You shall judge of that yourself, Charles, when you have heard all I have to tell you, unless you wish to settle for the lady what I fear she can never accomplish for herself, and close her history before it begins."—"Oh, I would not but hear it for the world," he exclaimed. "Then, dear Charles," said Fanny, "sit as quiet as ever you can, that we may attend to every word of it." Lucy put her finger to her lips, in the character of silence; Charles threw himself into an arm-chair; and leaning back, with an air of determined attention, Pneumanee continued: "I have a great esteem for her mother, who prevailed upon me to be at the ceremony; under my auspices, she said, it must be prosper-

ous ; my heart felt heavy for her disappointment. I never witnessed more childish absurdity ; she clung to the banisters in her way to the drawing-room ; wore a thick veil, that her exquisite embarrassment might not be visible ; shrunk back the hand she had been so eager to bestow, and spoke so low, that it was with difficulty the ceremony could be performed. It was no sooner over than I took my leave ; for my indulgence for human frailty almost forsakes me, when I see an affected young lady, constantly changing her posture for effect, lolling her head, biting her lips, pinching her cheeks to excite a bloom, and spreading incessant toils to catch some careless butterfly of the day ; while her system is despised by the wise and judicious, and she is exposed to the ridicule and sarcastic remarks of her pretended admirers."—" Can young ladies

ladies be so frivolous and vain who are bred up in good society, and accustomed to correct habits of thinking and acting."—"O yes, my dear Fanny: the provoking thing is, that good sense and great accomplishments are no security against vanity; a beauty fancies that every human excellence is comprehended under personal charms, and it is left to the sad experience of their future hours to discover that nothing is so precarious, nothing so transitory; and when its lustre fades, those who have relied upon its influence, will find chagrin, mortification, and sorrow following close behind it. There is an irresistible charm in the natural, easy, cheerful manner of a well-educated young lady; a fascination that every body feels, and all hearts universally consent to worship: but the labour and solicitude that is discoverable in affectation,

affectation, that would *force* you into admiration, dissolves the charm; and breaking the talisman, sets the captive free.

" But you must see me now arrived at the large castle in the country, with a party who engaged at the wedding to meet there at the end of the month ; and many of the neighbouring gentry were assembled to celebrate their arrival. The new-married couple had just arrived before us ; and before the usual greetings were well over, ' My dear Pneumanee,' said the lady, ' did you ever see such intolerable roads ? quite abominable ! I protest I am bruised to death ! and so dusty, I am quite choked ; I wonder they don't water the roads ; it is quite a shame to poison one in this manner ! then that dreadful solemn avenue of trees at the close of such a journey, and those hideous rooks cawing such melancholy

melancholy forebodings ! I had a great mind to tell the coachman to turn about his horses, and leave the avenue and the rooks to enjoy each other, without destroying me with their shade and their uproar, — what my poor nerves will do, I cannot say ; but we'll have those hideous trees down, — shan't we, love ?' turning gaily to her husband. ‘ I like to see an old over-grown misshapen oak (that has held up his proud head to many generations) levelled to the ground ; there's a sort of gratifying triumph in seeing his length prostrate before me. — Oh, pray look at these great elbow chairs ! Lord bless me, my dear, how big all your ancestors must have been to fill them !’— ‘ They were a hardy race, my love.’— ‘ They were bulky, I say, wer'nt they ? — Crimson damask curtains too ! bless their heavy hearts, what a taste they had !

had ! You have ordered all new, I hope ? How many legs have those giant tables ?—one, two three, four ; I believe they have forty, if I had patience to tell them —then with a loud and sarcastic laugh, ‘ Lord bless me, do look at these window-frames ! the house-maids must have been a large race too — how could the creatures find strength to throw up a sash ? Do, my dear creature, send for the workmen to-night — perhaps they would put new windows in a fortnight, and then we might see those ghastly old provoking trees cut down with triumph — Hey dear ! lolling upon his shoulder, ‘ why you don’t speak ? ’ — ‘ No indeed, my dear,’ he replied, ‘ I do not know what to say.’—‘ Dear man, why say it shall all be done as soon as possible. I’ll send to mamma’s upholsterers in Piccadilly, men of remarkable integrity and taste ; and tell me

me only what sum you will allow for the furniture of each room, and they will take care of all the rest—but perhaps,' she continued, 'some of the rooms are less antique; shew us the rest, dear—but you must support me, for I am tired to desperation.'—'I am afraid our friends are a little tired too,' he said, but lent her his arm—they led to the library, through the saloon; some of the company followed, while others, disgusted at her cruel insensibility to her husband's feelings, remained in the drawing-room. Fresh tables with horrid legs, now increased to a hundred, were the subjects of her amusement and scorn. I felt it my duty to watch for an opportunity to tell her the precipice upon which she stood—but where was such a moment to be found? As she lolled upon his arm, she went on: 'We'll change all these old rodomantading carpets.

for pea-green velvet, my dear ; sha'n't we ? Your hardy race of ancestors never trod upon velvet, love, I dare say ?—‘ I dare say not,’ he said ; ‘ but I have a respectful veneration for every thing they did.’—‘ Quite right, my dear ; but you must lament they had not better taste in their furniture.’—‘ No, my dear,’ he replied ; ‘ I like to see the style exactly as they enjoyed it ; a carpet they trod upon is dear to my recollection ; and the tables, where their hospitality was so frequently displayed, warm my heart whenever I look upon them ; and when I bless the Author of all the good things I enjoy, in the very chair in which my ancestors sat and rejoiced in their abundance, I never forget my gratitude to them for transmitting them to me so undiminished, from a source so pure ; for they were all men of high honour and respectability ; and I trust, my dear,’ he

he added with great kindness, ‘we shall both long enjoy together the fruits of their good conduct.’ I seized this moment to slip my arm in the disengaged one of hers—‘Excellent young man! I whispered; ‘endeavour, my dear Madam, to deserve him.’—‘O yes, my dear Pneumanee,’ she replied, ‘I know you very well, you are always on the strongest side.—Lord bless me!’ she continued, turning her eye to the picture of an old gentleman, in a great wig and embroidered coat, ‘who is that very fine old beau? is that one of my grand-papas?’ — ‘It is one of mine, Madam,’ he replied; ‘and I must recommend him to your attention and respect; he sat in nine successive parliaments, and was said to have resigned his seat, when too old to its duties, with the best judgment and purest conscience of any member who had ever sat there. On the back of the

the picture is this eulogy, written by the greatest man of his time.'—‘I dare say it is very true, my dear; and don’t you think it would be a very good plan to hang the picture with that side outwards, that every body may read such a testimony of his merit.’ He drew his arm hastily from hers, and stepped to the window; but immediately recollecting himself, before I could recover the surprise her conduct had given me, he reclaimed her arm. ‘I think you will like the breakfast room, he said; ‘it has a cheerful aspect, and the varied prospect of the river and its sloping banks are grateful to the eye, and I hope will please you.’—‘I am easily pleased,’ she said, and went on. The instant she reached the room, she flew to a harpsichord, and finding it locked, asked for the key; when, perceiving a paper pasted at the top, she read aloud

aloud the following words :—“ Touch
“ softly, stranger, these sad chords;
“ the last lovely hand that woke their
“ sweetest harmony, is gone for ever.
“ —How beautiful and good! how
“ loved and how lamented!” Every
eye filled with a ready tear, except hers
who was come to supply the place of
such a dear and interesting object;
to strike those very chords, and perhaps
for as limited a space. The portrait
that hung over the instrument was
very young and very beautiful. It
was no time to make inquiries; every
countenance felt, and every tongue was
silent. I thought,” said Pneumanee,
“ even a bride, in the exultation of
her heart, would have forgotten all
her attire and all her ornaments at the
moment of such an address; but a
selfish woman is enveloped in her own
importance, nothing from without can
soften her. ‘ Have you found the
key,

key, love?' she unfeelingly asked, though a tear was forcibly falling from his eye.—' I believe, my dear,' he answered, ' the key is lost for ever.' —' Oh, I'll have the carpenter open it to-morrow; but take off that dismal paper, I protest it makes me melancholy, I shall never like the room so well again; I wish you had torn it off before I came in.'—' I could never tear it off,' he said gravely; ' it has a sacred charm about it, so expressive of the adoration in which the lovely object was held, and the severity and deep affliction her loss occasioned, that it would be almost sacrilege to remove it; but the instrument itself shall give place to-morrow to one more suited to your taste and feelings.'—' That is very considerate and kind,' she said; ' but in the meantime she would try her own little bunch of keys; for she longed to know if the instrument

instrument had kept in 'tune,' and actually ran over to force them into the experiment, with a glee that was most distressing. I started up and led her out of the room; the bridegroom followed, and all the party strayed about the lawn till dinner was announced. The fresh air I intended should recover all my uneasy feelings; I felt its delightful influence; here I was safe from absurdity; there was space enough for it to range in without annoying me, and the fine venerable, *old and ugly trees*, where the young and lovely musician had so often wandered under their shade, and still hung heavy about my heart, increased in value as I contemplated the many generations to whom they had belonged, and the shelter they must have afforded to the sad and melancholy mourners who had lost so lovely and interesting a child. I would not, for
all

all the wealth of India, said I, have one of those trees cut down ; and turning quickly round to hear some taste according with my own, I met the bow of the ancient butler, who told me the company were assembled at dinner. The bride had taken her first seat at the many-legged table ; her husband had led her to it, and trusted that she would ever find there whatever she would most like to gratify her taste ; she smiled, and really looked very handsome. I hoped," continued Pneumanee, " that such repeated proofs of affection from such an elegant man had at least awakened her gratitude. A band of music from the lawn played all the time of dinner, and all was gay and cheerful but the wayward mistress of the house—the plate was too heavy, the glass unfashionable, the epergne so antique ; she detested every thing massy — the wine too was old, she
never

never liked any thing ancient—‘ and pray, my dear,’ speaking loud to her husband at the bottom of the table, ‘ who is that ancient dowager at the end of the room, that holds her child’s hat so tastefully while he is whipping his top?’ — ‘ I will explain to you another time,’ he replied; ‘ give me leave now to drink your health, and wish you many years’ enjoyment of my family castle, where I have many excellent neighbours, whose society you will find estimable, and the country round us is most picturesque and beautiful.’ — ‘ Castle! country! and neighbours!’ she repeated with a supercilious air and scornful emphasis; ‘ but who is the old lady? for I am dying to know who she *was*.’ — ‘ You will live till to-morrow, I hope, my dear,’ he said with a smile, ‘ and I will be sure to tell you then; but I must first give you her history, to secure your partiality,

tiality, before you get a prejudice from her appearance upon canvas.'—'Oh I shall never like her,' she said, 'let her history be what it will; it is too difficult to come at, and so I will add her to the Castle, the country, and the neighbours—four as dismal subjects for contemplation as ever I met with.'—'I am sorry you are not prepossessed in favour of my former friends,' he said gaily; 'but we will not neglect those who are present—here is health and pleasure to them all, and a hearty welcome to the Castle, where I hope we shall often meet in high health and good humour.'—'By all means,' she said; 'and let us take in old goody too, and her boy and his hat.'—'It is my mother, Madam,' he replied quickly; 'she filled the seat you do me the favour to sit in, with great affability. No person was ever more gracefully attentive to their guests, or more exemplary

emplary in virtue and elegant refinement.' A general silence prevailed for a moment; the whole party seemed determined to give the lady time for reflection; but, with admirable presence of mind, her husband regained his composure, and said: 'I consider it as one of my heavy misfortunes that I have been deprived of the power of introducing to your partiality a woman of such rare and excellent endowments.'—'Pray do not be uneasy upon that head,' she replied, 'I dare say we shall go on very well as we are.'

" An old gentleman who sat by me, said archly, ' What do *you* think of *that*, Ma'am?' I believed there was but one opinion in the room upon that subject. The conversation became general, and seemed to be kept up with the more spirit, to prevent the bride from opportunities of distressing her husband and his friends. Her mother
was

'was very uneasy ; she had never set her such bad examples, but she was very self-willed at home, and would never be governed in any thing."—

The trunks were now arrived, and most joyfully received : each name, in brass nails upon the cover, set every one immediately at work ; with unbounded spirit and joy they were all opened ; and, Look at my beautiful watch ! and *my* trinkets ! and *my* drawing-box ! and *my* microscope ! and *my* work-box ! and a thousand other of *my* pretty things, were echoed again and again through the circle.

"Happy youth !" said the Rector, "when joy and transports are purchased so easily."—"And yet," said Pneumanee, "how many people, and even near relations, are to be found, who have no enjoyment in such innocent and unaffected gratitude, and never seem to recollect that such events make

make impressions never to be erased in the longest life; such sweet memorials of kindness are handed down to posterity with eulogiums that are not to be purchased, at a more advanced age, by the largest legacy."

Pneumanee was thanked over and over again, and she appeared, if possible, with an added glow of sparkling beauty.

Charles caught an insect to put in his microscope; its brilliant eyes and feathered legs were new subjects for surprise and admiration; and when he heard there were at least six thousand insects, in different ways equally perfect, he was all astonishment. Pneumanee assured him there were three times that number of plants and flowers that, in every fibre, leaf, and colour, displayed infinite wisdom and beauty. Charles, with his accustomed energy, said he should breakfast, dine, and sup upon

upon his microscope. The Rector advised him to write the first line of Milton's hymn and paste it inside the cover—"These are thy works, Parent of good."

Fanny observed that in the midst of all her pretty presents, and the delight she felt in her watch, which she intended to look at every minute, and begged they would all regulate their time by it, as she should never be tired of telling them the hour; yet she could not forget the lady of the Castle, whom nothing could please or make happy. "If she was my wife," said Charles, "I would teach her to abuse my mother so; he had better get somebody that may behave better, I am sure she will never do for him: and then to turn that fine old gentleman wrongside out, because she did not like the fashion of his coat, I never heard any thing so rude and so unkind:

kind : her husband too was the very little boy in the picture ; she ought to have loved it dearly."

Any farther comments were interrupted by a visit from a country squire, who lived but a few miles from them. With a very good heart in a very rough case, he spoke all and more than he thought, lest he should be suspected of giving way to the customs and whims of the world, when he was determined to gratify and be governed only by his own.

He had no idea of being regulated by the opinions of the public. He would breakfast at five o'clock in the summer ; what was it to him that fools laid in bed till ten ? He would dine at one ; so did every body else, but they chose to call it luncheon ; both the name and the thing were detestable. He went to bed early ; so should every body else, that meant to live

live long or happy. Did not the birds and beasts tell us what we ought to do? did not Nature do all she could to force us to it, by making the night-air pernicious to breathe in? but the world were wrong-headed in every thing—all wishing to live long, but doing every thing in the world to prevent it. He hated the very name of fashion; it was a licence to be absurd: it turns a man into a monkey, subjects him to the whims of his tailor, who makes his waistcoat at some times down to his knees—and he exultingly pulled down his own—at others tucks your waistcoat up to your chin, and makes you all legs and no pockets. Then the poor ladies in the country are never right: the great ones make a fashion; however absurd, every body must wear it; and by the time they have exerted all their means and contrivances to get at it, whip say the milliners,

milliners, it is time to change it; and so the country misses are all at a fault, and must set to work again to undo all they had done before. Charles, whom he always called *his boy*, now brought him his microscope; and fixing it first to his own sight, begged him not to move it, but look at the fly's eye he had fixed there on purpose for him: "There is no fashion in that, Sir."—"I should think there was, my boy, by the absurdity of it; do you know," he added, smiling, "I have always determined to see with my own eyes, and you have determined in my old age that I should see with yours; you are quite as bad as the harpy Fashion that governs the ladies—now they have long tails that keep all the gentlemen at a distance, now so short, they appear to have all their feathers pulled out—now hats as big as tubs, and now not big enough to cover their

heads — sometimes rows of curls on each side of their heads, then cropped to the quick, with bunches of flowers like horns upon their temples. An't all this true? why I could run on for a week upon all these follies: but you beauties look well in every thing; you are sure of that, and so you make all these experiments to convince us that you do so, and make all the poor plain women look worse than they did before." Pneumanee smiling said, "Ladies most naturally wished to please, and it was a maxim with the best and wisest, that it is better to fall in with the general custom of dress; for it gives a woman a strange look of obstinacy and self-conceit, to keep on a fashion that will give her an air of singularity."—"And yet," says he, "I always observe you are covered up to the chin, when you have more beauty concealed than any body can display; but

but you are right, every thing is more or less valued, as it is easy or difficult to be come at."

After much of the same careless kind of conversation, which made every body present know the full value of refinement, he took his leave. "What a pity," said Pneumancee, as soon as he had called all his dogs around him by their respective names in the loudest tones; "what a pity that a man so distinguished by the goodness of his heart, and the liberal manner in which he conducts himself in all material circumstances in life, should allow himself to entertain an idea that his opinion constitutes right or wrong! His fondness for candour he carries to excess, from a strange conceit that it is incompatible with good breeding, and keeps you in constant alarm for what he is going to say, to prove he is above the tram-

rules of propriety, and the customs which good sense has happily imposed upon civilised society." The Rector said, " He valued himself upon the contrast between himself and a very rich neighbour, who, wishing to marry a young woman of whom he was very fond, shrank from his plan lest the world should laugh at the disparity of their years. Strange, indeed, to prefer the opinion of others to his own domestic comfort ! many such matches turn out most happily : the good temper and animating spirits of a young wife have cheered the failing enjoyments of her husband into all most youthful existence ; whilst his good sense and unvaried kindness have secured her happiness and her grateful affection."

Fanny took the earliest opportunity to request Pneumanee to tell her more of the foward lady. " It was a painful

painful history," she said ; " but she was the more particular in relating it, as it was a dangerous rock, upon which many a young lady's happiness had been fatally wrecked.

" The evening," she continued, " at the Castle, was spent very pleasantly ; the young girls of the village were prettily dressed in white with pink ribbons and straw hats, the young men in blue, and they formed a very rustic dance on the lawn to pleasant music ; refreshments were placed under the trees, that were hung with coloured lamps ; and the company, now become very numerous, walking about in gay groups, had a particularly pleasing effect. One party that were much sheltered from observation, soon became the subject of every body's respect and attention. All the decrepid and aged poor were seated together,

with

with each a new coat or gown, and a table fully spread before them. My friend led his bride up to them, and said, ‘Here, my old friends, I have brought you a benefactress, who I am sure will never forget how much you want her assistance.’ “I think,” continued Pneumanee, “the many blessings they uttered was the most grateful incense I ever heard from poor creatures, whose lot in life had been so severe, whose days, so near their close, could promise so little enjoyment: both the attending spirit and recording angel must have glowed with pride, as they wrote down such a scene; even the bride appeared to feel sensibly the kindness of their benefactor. ‘Poor creatures,’ she said, ‘they smiled as if they had been little used to it.’ I seized the moment to say, ‘What an inestimable man has united your

your happiness with his own! never let him repent his choice.' 'O, I quite adore him!' she replied.

"We found at our return to the house music and every preparation for a dance; the bride was led to the top of the room, and whilst all the little bustle of choosing partners and places was going on, she complained of sudden fatigue, and could not possibly dance one step. Every possible attention was paid to her by all the guests and by her excellent husband. She was laid upon a sofa, covered with a shawl, and requested to say when the dancing or the music would be too much for her. The ball went on, and at the close of every dance her husband anxiously inquired for her.

"She had time for reflection, and I conceived the gaiety of the scene would have secured the company the remainder.

remainder of the evening from any of her whims ; but bad habits are not so easily corrected, and she seemed to have gained fresh powers of tormenting by the interval of quiet ; the tunes were the very ugliest she had ever heard, and certainly the most noisy ; she supposed such heavy old floors had no spring in them, she never heard such a grating of feet ; perhaps it was owing to want of chalking : the effect was dreadful, let the cause be what it would, it had quite distracted her head, and tore her nerves in a thousand pieces.

"The dance of course was shortened, and an elegant supper succeeded, and every body recommended, as the best possible cure for both head and nerves to be quite at rest in bed ; but they were all mistaken, for eating a hearty supper was the best possible remedy for both, and what she always found much

much more beneficial than any thing else.

"She was no sooner seated at the head of her table, than, turning to a gentleman who sat by her, she said, 'Do you like these rural sports?' with an emphasis upon *you*, that gave her own opinion as freely as if she had expressed it.—'Indeed I do,' he replied; 'I am a great admirer of the country; I delight in the beauties of Nature, and am never tired of contemplating their unspeakable variety; it elevates the mind, and engages its highest and best affections.'—'I am passionately fond of London,' she said. "So am I, madam; and so must every body who knows the value of its innumerable advantages: but the preference of a country or city life can never be sufficiently estimated, but by those who enjoy them both. The fine fresh breeze of an early sun-shine morning,"

he said with a smile,' requires a great deal in the London scale to weigh it down; it awakens the heart to universal benevolence.'

" 'Oh, pray add a cow to your common, and a goose on your green.' —' Very pretty objects too,' he replied, ' if you feel that gaiety and gratitude which every appearance of Nature gives to those who do not disdain it.' —' I disdain every thing that does not amuse my fancy, or improve my understanding.' —' My dear madam,' he replied, 'they can contribute to both; when you see a cow, you may picture to yourself "the milk-maid singing blithe;" recollect the cream, the custard, and the cheese that supports the peasant, ornaments your table, and helps to support mine.' —' A very good advocate for a cow!' she said with some scorn; ' perhaps you could plead too in favour of a goose?' —' Most assuredly,'

assuredly,' he said ; ' it was an excellent savoury bird at Michaelmas. Custom, in gratitude for the use of its quills, which were infinitely extensive, had given one day in the year (as a memorial of its worth) to all ranks in the community, under the severe penalty of wanting money every other day in it, if they omitted the proper respect to such a distinguished bird,'—

' Supposing then, my dear,' addressing herself to her husband, ' I am drawn, in the picture you proposed, upon a common; a cow will be a pretty object in the back-ground; caressing a goose, as a bird of the highest possible pretension, will give a pleasing interest to the piece, and make a good group, stuck up with the family portraits, that I do not doubt represent great admirers of the country.' "

" Oh," exclaimed Fanny, " how could she be so rude and so cruel? did nobody

nobody put her in mind that her husband was too kind and too good to be so treated?"—"There was a total silence," Pneumanee said, "as if every body felt with horror her unguarded incivility.. The attention of the company was now directed to a gentleman who sung remarkably well, and prevented the lady from obtruding her sarcastic remarks for the remainder of the evening." Fanny said, she could not express how much she disliked her; but she hoped, when she reviewed upon her pillow her conduct of the day, she would be very sorry, and be more upon her guard for the future. "Aye, my dear Fanny," replied Pneumanee, "if she had been bred up in such habits, we might rely upon her improvement; but you shall determine for her what her reflections could be upon her pillow by her conduct the next morning. As most

most of the company remained at the Castle, they proposed, after breakfast, to see the fine collection of pictures for which it was celebrated.

"When they reached the room where the locked harpsichord had been the day before, it had given place to a most splendid modern instrument. The bride was led to it by her husband, who hoped it would be a perpetual source of amusement to her. 'It is not Kirkman's, I hope,' she said; 'for his never keep in tune. But you are very good, love; and if I was in a humour to play, I would try it.' — 'Favour me with one air, that if you should not like its tones, I may change it: I bought it on those terms.' — 'Oh, I could not play so soon after breakfast for millions; besides, I see it *is* Kirkman's.' A young lady, who said she always played immediately after breakfast, obliged the company with

with some plaintive airs, that suited the idea of succeeding to the once admired and beloved musician now no more. Every body admired the instrument. ‘I hope, my dear, you like it,’ said her attentive husband, with an anxious smile. ‘O no, I don’t indeed,’ she replied; ‘and I request as a favour that I may have the old melancholy ditty back again?’—‘Never, my dear,’ he replied, and walked away. ‘Aye,’ she provokingly said, ‘I see already what it is to be a wife,’ and sighed deep with vexation.

“I immediately took my leave, ashamed to witness such perverseness, and had the mortification to hear her say, as I left the room, ‘I shall never play upon that instrument as long as I live!’”—“Oh,” said Fanny, “what will that poor gentleman do with such a wife?”—“It is many a gentleman’s

fate, my dear ; and one of the certain consequences will be the entire loss of his affection, and of course of his society ; he will soon find various occasions to be absent ; he will dread to return to such caprice ; and when she finds herself quite deserted, it will be no balsam to her wounded pride that she inflicted it upon herself.

"Affection is of an extremely delicate nature : like the butterfly, left to wing its way with playful freedom upon zephyrs of its choice, how airy and unrestrained it flies ! but when you would trammel or restrain it, its spirit and its beauty are gone. From neglect of little civilities in the common occurrences of life, much of the contempt and ridicule bestowed upon matrimony derives its source. If ever you marry, Fanny, take care never to be deficient in those trifling attentions,

tions, which, appearing to be of little consequence, make up much of the domestic harmony of life."—"Is it always the lady's fault," asked the artless girl? "By no means, my dear: If a woman is so unfortunate as to marry a churlish man, he fancies it disgraceful to himself to attend to his wife in company; and I have seen a young and beautiful woman, in the first month of her marriage, totally neglected by her husband, though she had brought him very large property, and but for her unlucky choice of him, would have been caressed and entertained by every person in the room.

"A man never appears to more advantage than when paying attention to his wife; at least she might have a small part of what he distributes to the rest of the company; it is a proper compliment to his own taste and judgment, gives her importance

tance in herself, which she is sure to use to his advantage. Some gentlemen have no name by which to call their wives, have never been heard to mention any other than *you*, by which she is to understand herself; and you may judge what feelings are conveyed with the sound. And, strange to say! you may meet married people who never by any chance speak a word to each other."—"It must be very hard," said Fanny, "to make a good wife."—"It is not easy if you meet with an ill-tempered or ill-bred man: But my experience convinces me the ladies are more generally in fault; they soon neglect those little civilities on which much of the comfort of life depends, and teach their husbands, by example, to treat them carelessly: on the other hand, if a woman is too solicitous to please, men are apt to encroach upon their kindness, till they become abject slaves;

'slaves; and you will scarcely believe me that I once knew a most charming woman, who married a man in every respect her inferior, who, within three months after she disengaged all her friends by marrying him, told me, he would never get out of bed till she had prepared his shoes and stockings by his bed-side. She had a very considerable fortune, a very liberal education, and was highly qualified to shine in the first circles of polished life.'*— "What a shocking man!" said Fanny; "I believe it is the best plan not to marry at all."

"I do not advise that, my dear, because the idea is most unfairly attached to a single life, that you were not qualified for the duties of a married one. Every half-bred man laughs at the state; and many mistaken women, to avoid the ridicule, marry

* A fact,

hastily,

hastily, and find too late, that to escape a fancied ill, they have incurred a lasting misery."—"What is to be done then?" said Fanny. (She was now sixteen.) "Why, my dear girl, qualify yourself, not by superior accomplishments, playing, singing, and dancing better than your acquaintance, or other such frivolous pursuits; but correcting and regulating your temper, practising patience and forbearance in all the little trials you meet with, occurring in the best regulated and most happy families. Improve your heart and your understanding, cultivate an obliging readiness to please in all your habits, feel a universal indulgence to others' failings, and a watchful eye over your own; acquire a constant habit of cheerfulness and good humour, and you will stand a fair chance of being long loved and admired; remembering never to marry under any circumstances,

circumstances, unless you respect the understanding and conduct of the man, even though he were a prince."—"I can never marry," said Fanny ; "for no such respectable man, so deserving, will find his way to the Parsonage, and I am sure I will never go far from it to look for him ; for I will not, after all that you have said, 'unsought be won.'" Pneumanee smiled, and was glad to find she was fond of Milton ; "for I heard you tell your brother this morning, that the fresh fields called him 'to mark how mounts the vine, and how the citron grove.'"—"O yes," she said, "it was her paradise to walk with Charles in a morning, and read Milton before breakfast ; and she should be miserable to live with any body who did not admire and had the same taste for the Paradise Lost that she had."

The arrival of two young ladies,
who

who were come to spend their winter in Devonshire for the benefit of their aunt's health, interrupted farther remarks. They had heard Pneumanee was at the Parsonage ; and having seen her often in Town, took the liberty to consider her as an old acquaintance, and was so glad to find any body they had ever seen before, that they determined to take the first moment to come and see her. Pneumanee presented them to the Rector and his wife, as to her best and most highly valued friends. " The best creatures in the world, no doubt," said Miss Volatile; " I am quite delighted to see you again, my dear. How could you leave Town so soon ? You don't know how many delightful balls and masquerades we had after you were gone. I never saw London so gay, the season lasted so long this year ; and they say it will last longer and longer every

every year, till by general consent there will be no summers in the country at all. Tell me, my dear creature, are there any beaux in this part of the world? any balls, concerts, or public rooms? We came but last night, and I want to know all about it. Oh, lady A.'s ball was delightful! Lord R. was there, so affable to every body! wherever he fixed his eye, the ladies were so pleased!—eighty thousand a year!—well, she will be a lucky woman indeed that can captivate him! —all the world admire him, he is so chatty and good-humoured—whatever he dances with, is sure to get into the papers next day as his intended wife —quite shocking I protest!—The sea air does not tan, does it, ma'am? What do you use for your complexions here? I dare say this good lady, your friend, has a hundred good receipts: her children do them great credit—

pure

pure red and white!" pointing to Fanny. "Do you get good milk of roses? arcanum wash? or Venetian bloom? which do they sell best here? —O, I forgot to tell you, Lord R. likes a brown complexion best, I heard him say so, except it was a very fine fair one with darkish hair. He thinks too the present style of beauty rather too fat; so all the ladies are walking down, to be as thin as possible for the next campaign. You have a very good beach here, I believe; pray, ma'am, does your sea air make people fat or thin?" All these questions were asked without any reference to an answer, or indeed any intention of receiving one. All this time her eyes were variously directed, as if in the habit of looking for something she had never found. Her sister, who had acquired from necessity a habit of listening, could only add a yes or no, which

which she repeated upon all occasions ; and when opportunity would allow, added three or four of one or the other of these expletives, and sometimes of both, to correct a hasty decision, which was generally formed too quick to be always accurate.

" Suppose," said Pneumanee, " this important Peer should change his taste the next season, and prefer a little plumpness in his beauty ?" — " We should all die of repletion," she said ; " but I know a particular friend of *his*, who corresponds with a brother of a friend of mine ; and through *her*, and *him*, and *his*, I shall learn all the variations of his taste, and act accordingly.—We shall be excellent neighbours, I hope ; I wish we were not a mile from you—we are very dismal at home, no amusement but reading and working—*aunt* is too ill to give dinners, and it is an eating age, you know :

know : you can never get men about you if you don't give dinners ; and when you do, they are gone as soon as they have eaten them ; they are always impatient to spend their evening some where else ; and if by chance they come up into the drawing-room, they shew evident impatience to leave it again—unless indeed there's some new beauty there, or a very large fortune ; then they buzz about her, as if the more nonsense they talked, the more they were sure to please her—an't it so, Mary ?"—“ Yes, yes,” replied Mary ; “ oh no, no, no, not always.”—“ Why no,” Miss Volatile said ; “ not always : for instance, when Lord R. spoke to me, he knew I delighted in plants, and how much they absorbed the oxygen, and emitted a deleterious gas. I had met him at that delightful man's lecture, who had promised us a little anatomy next week—how wise we are

all growing ! what did our poor grandmothers do ?"

" They studied more the fashions of the heart and conduct, perhaps," said Pneumancee. " Perhaps they did," Miss V. said; " for they were in a wretched state of ignorance. How they danced, poor things, with their Louvre and Rigadoon ! had never even heard of a waltz ! How the gay Sir Philip Sydney, that fine old beau, would stare to see what a fine gentleman is in these days ! "—" Sir Philip," said the Rector (who had listened to this never-ending rhapsody with great composure) " was the most heroic and virtuous character of his time, the delight of the age in which he lived."

— " Could you find a modern fine gentleman," said Pneumancee, " for whom the court and the country would equally mourn by general consent for many months : such a testimony

mony from a whole nation puts his merit out of the reach of comparison."

—“Oh, but who would like such an old squared-toes now? what a precious figure he would make at a waltz, rounding his elbows to a circle—going to bed at eleven, and getting up with the sun—*à propos* to the sun, it puts me in mind of this frightful comet that is stalking about, portending mischief. I am quite afraid of it; they say, if it should bolt and run out of its course (and there seems to be no reason in the world why it should not), it would burn and crush as all to powder; besides, I am told it singes the air in some mysterious way, and spoils the clearest complexion.” Fanny laughed loud at this absurdity, and really believed that Miss Volatile had said it on purpose to amuse them; and as soon as she had tired herself with remarks, and left the Parsonage, Fanny innocently asked, if

all London ladies talked so much, and to so little purpose? Pneumanee hoped that the number was very small; for it was a habit that every body dreaded as the severest tax politeness and good breeding had to pay, to listen to such extreme folly; "which unfortunately," she said, "seemed the more abundant in measure as it was less in weight."

In their morning's walk by the sea, where an east wind had left a high rolling wave, though its own violence had subsided, they saw floating boards that gave the immediate idea of a wreck; and the children, with sighs and groans, were all conjecturing the misery of the sufferers. Fanny dwelt on the sorrows and grief of their friends, and made to herself such a picture of woe, that she began immediately to cry at her own scenery, when an old fisherman appeared with his net over his shoulders; they learnt
from

from him that the boards had been washed from the beach by a tide unusually high. They had indeed been part of a ship ; but, thank God ! it had come to a much happier ending : he and his dame had been often warmed by some of its old timbers, and he wished every ship in his Majesty's service, God bless him ! might shiver their timbers in the same comfortable way. "God help the poor sailors," he went on, "who were near the coast last night!—it blew guns. I prayed heartily for 'em, and I know how much more heartily they prayed for themselves. I have been to sea, man and boy, these sixty years ; I have seen such sights ! such clinging to masts and rigging ! such screams for help when none was near ! and such a dead silence when all was over ! aye, 'tis those that go down to the sea in ships that see the wonders of the Lord."

Every

Every little eye was fixed upon the sailor, and with one consent they gave him all the contents of their little purses. Pneumanee, who took advantage of every circumstance to improve their minds, advised Fanny to acquire more command over her feelings ; it was a want of proper firmness to make imaginary woes. Sensibility was given us for a blessing, and good sense to keep it in proper bounds ; and the parents who taught their children to feel for the sufferings of a fly, did them as much injustice as those who allowed them to torture it. It weakened a mind greatly to be always indulging its finer feelings ; the proper medium was to teach them the real value of things ; and to prevent a frivolous weakness of character, they were to think and speak of great objects. "Astronomy," she said, "was peculiarly adapted to remedy a little and narrow mind

mind. As there was reason to believe that the sun was a hundred thousand times bigger than the earth, and the distance from it so great, that a cannon-ball continuing its ordinary rapid motion, would not arrive from thence in the space of a hundred and fifty thousand years; and though in the immensity of the distance, the imagination was overwhelmed: yet such ideas wonderfully expanded the mind." Many were the questions that arose from such a subject, and Pneumanee promised them Derham's Astro-Theology for their evening's amusement. "Estates, provinces, and kingdoms," she added, "vanish at the presence of such stupendous objects, and you feel proportionate enlargement from the contemplation of such great and sublime ideas."

Pneumanee commended their behaviour to the poor sailor; those who were

were blessed with a competence, should never cease to feel for those whose lot in life had been a constant anxiety to procure its bare necessities. Charles got leave to go to the old man's cot, for he longed to see the shivering timbers of the old ship on fire, and to hear the hearty old fellow talk of the sea, and all its perils, and all its glories. At their return to the Parsonage, they again found the Miss Volatiles : they had heard that there were to be poney-races soon upon the beach, and they had quite forgotten to ask when they would be ; and so, as they had been rambling upon the cliffs, they took them again in their way home ; and indeed the Parsonage was so pretty, the sun seemed to shine there more than usually cheerful, it always looked happy. "But when were the races?"—"The 1st of September," Fanny said, "and the 14th."—"Now remember,

ber, Mary, symbol the first, Tower of Babel ; fourteenth, Diogenes or Watchman."—"No, no, no," said Mary, "it is Bajazet or Fountain."—"Oh fie, Mary, where is your memory? those are symbols forty-six and forty-seven."—"No," Mary said, that was Direction-post and Apothecary." And then followed the division of a room into nine parts, and Glass-blower and Apollo, Cock-fighting, State-bed, and Trojan Horse, with a variety of sounds so new in their combinations, that the party were astonished at what it could all mean, and naturally thought the Tower of Babel was the watch-word, and all the rest was to exemplify the confusion of tongues : and not till the ladies had once more taken their leave, did Pneumanee explain that the art of memory was now reduced to technical arrangement, and that those who would not take the trouble to exercise and perfect

flect their memory, were giving themselves ten times the trouble to learn a variety of symbols, that in some weak minds confused every idea about them ; and by a perpetual system of connection, they had not one simple idea left.

Charles anxiously inquired, if you could really remember all that you read of history by such an art. " By symbols, there was no doubt," Pneumanee said, " that you might remember when your favourite Gustavus Adolphus began and ended his reign ; but the anecdotes you mentioned to-day, that he never engaged in any battle without first praying at the head of his troops ; that he used afterwards to thunder out in a strong and energetic manner a German hymn, in which he was joined by his whole army ; and that the effect of forty or fifty thousand voices was both wonderful and terrible : all this, and so much more as you

you mentioned of your hero to-day, would have required so many symbols to learn, that to a memory so good as yours the anecdote itself could not cost you half the trouble."—"Gustavus," Charles said, "was a noble fellow; for he said, a man made a better soldier in proportion to his being a better Christian; and was said to have died with his sword in his hand, the word of command in his mouth, and victory in his imagination." The evening was exceedingly boisterous, and often interrupted by the furious roaring of the winds; their book and their work gave way to fears, for the poor sailors who might not be far from the shore. Early after breakfast the next day, they walked to the beach, fearfully anxious lest some appearance of shipwreck should realize their fears; but all was safe, and they were straying about to pick up shells;

Charles.



Charles had been led on some distance, every moment stooping with his little basket, when he came running back to say, the Tower of Babel and Bajazet were coming. This occasioned a peal of laughter that did not immediately subside. Fanny earnestly hoped the young ladies would join them ; for she really believed that a very few visits would prevent her from ever wishing to go to London. Pneumancee soon convinced her that the London atmosphere did not naturally produce frivolous or absurd conduct ; that it was the consequence of the examples at home, and to the conversation to which your familiar hours were accustomed. If ladies had the best masters for their daughters, qualified them to sing in the first Italian style, to walk in the first circles, and to excel in every possible accomplishment ; if they allowed them at home to talk of nothing but

but balls and beaux, of who is in love, and who is to be married, of *nice* men and handsome men, and a thousand frivolous remarks upon complexions, cosmetics, gowns, tippets, and frippery: how can they expect them to be properly conversible upon other subjects. If they read history with you every morning, and gave the particulars of what they read every evening, as you do; and heard the circumstances examined and commented upon, the causes and effects traced to their source: their minds would soar above such trifles, and they could never for a moment join in such discussions. " You will scarcely believe," added Pneumanee, " that I have known a lady who made her daughter set down in a book, kept for the purpose, all the probable matches, divorces, or lyings-in she had heard of in the day; it was called her Anticipation Volume, and
the

the grand object was to reckon, at the conclusion of the events, how far her information had been accurate. It was impossible not to laugh at a pursuit so interesting and important."

Charles was repeating some anecdotes of his hero Gustavus and his favourite Oxenstiern, when the Miss Volatiles came up to them. "O my dear creatures, how d'ye all do? were you not blown away last night? I really thought our cottage would have blown over to France; we are close to Calais, an't we?"—"O no," said Charles.—"I could not sleep," Miss V. continued, "for thinking how Mary and I should look if we were blown over so unrest. I rang the bell, and had a thicker night-gown in case of accidents: it would have been so cold."—"Did you not think of the poor sailors?" said Fanny. "O no," she replied; "they were able

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able to take care of themselves ; I only thought what we should do, if we were blown over to the Continent, and should drop into the sea by the way."—"Beth could not happen," Fanny said, smiling : and Charles, availng himself of the moment Miss V. was taking breath after such a distressing vision, asked her, "If she knew any thing about Gustavus Adolphus or his friend Oxenstiern?"—"Not a word," she said ; "were they blown over to France?" Charles's natural propriety forsook him, and he laughed so unguardedly, that his mother bid him walk on with his younger sister.

The young ladies inquired if it often thundered or lightened there ? they had both fancied they had seen a flash, and were very much afraid of it. "Was there no circulating library in the village ? they must send for books from Town ; but they only send down
to

to the country a parcel of old trash, that their London customers are not likely to want ; they really knew not how to spend their time without novels — a new novel was the greatest possible treat ; nothing in real life could be so interesting." Fanny asked if they were not fond of reading history ? she read two hours every day to her papa after breakfast, and alawys thought the time too short.

" And do you make me believe," said Miss V. " that you can be as much entertained with those old Dons of ancient times, as I am with the fancied events of modern times, and the refined and elegant manners of modern beaux." — " Fanny," said her mother, " will have few opportunities of judging by comparison ; her reading and her society must naturally be confined." — " But when *she comes out*, you will take her to Town, of course ;

you," turning to Pneumanee, " will present her at court. I know you always go there. O, I recollect somebody told me you were the handsomest young lady in the room, and the best dressed too. I wish I could recollect who it was that said it; do you, Mary? I know you were present."—
" Was I?" said Mary; " there is no symbol for it that I know."—" Nonsense," said her sister; " symbols are of no use for such things as that; I'll try and recollect myself who it was."
" No, pray do not," said Pneumanee; " for I shall forget the person and the thing quite as soon as those who said it."—" Is that the case," said Miss V. " why I never forget any thing of the kind that is said to me; and to keep them full in my memory, write them all down in a book: it may be a great comfort, you know, when they may grow scarce, to resort
to

to the original stock ; and I feel by experience that they will never fail to give me pleasure."—"Yes," said Mary, "we want no symbols to remember those things ; I can say all by heart what Lord R. said about the anatomy of a lady's heart ; shall I repeat it?"—"Not for worlds," she replied ; "the company, you know, he said, were always excepted from satirical remarks. No heart could have such a portion of vanity as he described.—Was that a flash of lightning ? Do, my dear creature, (*to Fanny*), take the steel out of my stays ; if another flash comes, I shall die ! I shall die!"

Fanny was ruminating upon all she had heard ; her imagination was puzzled with the term *coming out*, as a something that *was to be done*, and was evidently connected with a journey to London, which she had never before considered.

considered as a possible event. Pneumanee's total indifference to admiration conveyed such an idea of dignity to her mind, compared with Miss V.'s eagerness to retain in hers every thing that could flatter and increase her vanity; Lord R.'s anatomy of a lady's heart, suggesting to her an idea that she would carefully dissect and scrutinize her own: altogether made such a chaos in her imagination, that she had not at all attended to what Miss V. had said, till the reiterated sound, *I shall die*, roused all her sensibility, and she eagerly asked, "What shall I do? where shall I run?"—"The steel! the steel!" was all she heard, and it told her nothing.

Mary having taken hers from her stays, and thrown it upon the sand, now came to her sister's relief; and taking the mischievous and dreaded steel

steel from all danger of attraction, explained the whole affair ; and Fanny, whose childhood had been carefully guarded from every species of folly, was very glad that her alarming apprehension at the sound of death ended so gaily ; for it was impossible not to laugh heartily. When Charles, who saw from a distance that something wrong was going on, ran eagerly to the spot, his laughing knew no bounds ; and when a reproving look from his mother would have restrained his mirth, he ran off with Fanny on his arm, to enjoy his humour at a distance. Miss V. observed, as they walked home, that country-people are so used to storms and tempests, and "*hair-breadth 'scapes,*" that there was no being up to them. The morning's adventure, and the great disadvantage of suffering absurd fears and prejudices to take possession of a youthful mind, and

and the difficulty to eradicate them, afforded much amusement in the interval of reading for the evening. Charles, when he left the drawing-room at night, again opened the door to charge Pneumanee, if she wore a *steel front*, to take it out if the clouds looked oppressed with electric fluid; and a peal of laughter, as they went up stairs, closed their happy day.

Sunday. — It was pleasant, as the Rector's family walked to church, to see the children of the village run to meet the young ladies, in the new bonnets and frocks carried to them the preceding evening, while the parents, by smiles and courtesies, as they stood ready to follow them, at their respective doors, expressed the strongest sense of their kindness, and their own silent gratitude. Never was the service of the church read with more impressive

impressive dignity than by the Rector to-day : - the text was, " And he sent them to their own homes," after having miraculously fed a multitude, not to the bigoted seclusion of a cloister, where the exercise of virtue could have little scope, and the heart must contract its duties to narrow limits ; nor to the wild desire of preaching the Word of God in barns and fields, to frighten the timid and mislead the ignorant : but sent to their own homes, to perform the several endearing duties of social life. Divine Wisdom well knew that in their respective situations, as fathers, masters, and friends, they had much to perform." Every description of home was beautifully pictured to the heart : a grand comparison, forcibly described, between the multitude, *then* and *now*, every where assembled to hear the same divine truths ; and an elegant exhortation, as we returned

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to our homes, to remember the several blessings we enjoyed there, and a trust in the superintending Providence of God, that we should again and again return to hear his Word in the same place, and to our homes with the same grateful sense of his goodness and mercy. The language was simple and most impressive. Pneumance was confident that not a single peasant, when he pulled up the latch of his door, but was thankful for the comforts he found within it; and if he had been unmindful of them before, would resolve never to forget them in future.— Fanny said, the front-door of the Parsonage should be a monitor to her in future, as well as the great rusty church-door, which was so heavy with its coat of nails, that she always expected it to crush her.

Monday.—Pneumance absent for a few days.

When

When the children were gone to bed, and Fanny and Charles were left some time longer, the Rector told Charles he was now at an age to finish his education at a public school; he preferred it greatly to a private one, because virtue consists more in action than reflection, and the consequences of good and bad conduct are immediately felt in the one, while it is only talked of in the other: the one is an ample field to exercise the heart, the other a theory that may never be called into action. Fanny looked very sorry, till she saw that Charles smiled. "Now, as a mariner," continued the Rector, "going to an unknown coast, would surely supply himself with the best charts that described the rocks and quicksands lying in his way, I have begun such a chart, Charles, for you; and as you would think the mariner a fool who would lock up such a chart
in

in his desk, without looking to see to what dangers he was exposed, I shall expect, that you will study my chart, that you may be well apprised of all the mischiefs that may surround you."

—“To be sure I will, Sir,” Charles said gaily.

“ You are going, my dear boy, to a world so new to you, so unlike the quiet retirement you have been accustomed to here, that you may not immediately be reconciled to it. You will lose your mamma’s and my perpetual guidance; but if you behave well, you will make friends of those appointed to govern you; if you do not behave well, you will ill requite our affectionate tenderness, and embitter those lives that have been employed in constant endeavours to make yours happy.” Fanny applied her handkerchief to tears that would no longer be suppressed, and Charles looked as if he

was already guilty of the sin of ingratitude ; but recollecting himself, and feeling a consciousness that he could never disappoint expectations so pleasing to his heart, he put on an air of cheerful attention, and the Rector went on :—

“ Many of your school-fellows will be heirs to great rank and great riches ; choose your companions among the virtuous and the good, and you will never be tempted to desert those principles and habits we have been so industrious to instil from your earliest infancy.

“ Remember that though never any religion exposed itself to so fair a trial at the bar of Reason, as the Christian’s, none ever so fairly invites to a fair and free discussion, confiding in itself and the pure merits of its cause, and warning us to lay aside all prejudice, and employ our best understandings to examine

amine the great and important truths it will unfold ; yet at your time of life I would have you carefully avoid such subjects. You may meet with orators to whom faith would be troublesome : it is expedient to many that the Gospel should not be true, and such people exert their wit and talents in endeavouring to prove it false ; which I am sure would be as painful for you to hear, as it would be impossible for you to think.

" You will see in your chart the concealed rocks that lie in every direction near that coast.

" Politics you may perhaps wonder to see marked out with so much attention, conceiving, from your customary habits, that they are not likely to come in your way ; but the little world you are about to enter, circumscribed as it appears, will probably settle your opinions, and fix your

habits and character for the remainder of your life. I need not tell you, my dear boy, how difficult it must be for you to judge of the complicated machine of government ; so unwieldy, so unbounded in its objects and views, that it is impossible for those who do not see all its movements to form impartial opinions about it. There are men whose flagitious lives and ruined fortunes prepare them for any thing ; their hopes of ease and advancement depend upon a change of affairs and the subversion of order ; they condemn all kinds of government, because it interferes with their lawless views. It is much to be wished, for the interest of society, that all great men should be good ; and you may venture to fix in your mind, that a man of bad private character, of vicious habits, must be unfit to govern, because his own passions keep him in bondage.

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"The Chevalier Bayard's glorious title, 'The Chevalier without Fear or Reproach,' warms my heart whenever I hear it: such a man was fit to govern the world. But we should be circumspect and modest upon such subjects till we better understand them.—I have marked gaming of every description in your chart, as both the Sylla and Charybdis of life; the deepest sea, the most conflicting currents, the blackest tempests, and most tremendous lowering storms, incessant roll round those tremendous rocks; every amiable propensity in the heart of man, every endearing tie, every sacred pledge, every honourable feeling, every manly object, and every religious obligation, are set aside and forgotten when gaming takes possession of the human mind. It may be said to be an eclipse of the soul, that blackens and deforms it to the lowest degree of depravity. I speak

speak so strongly from having seen the most fatal effects from it, and believing it has a fascination in its nature, that, if tasted, is difficult to resist. Study that part of your map with diligent attention.

" To descend to subjects much less important, and yet very necessary to constitute the character of a gentleman, let me recommend to you never to make *the ladies* the subject of ridicule. Nothing betrays more ignorance of polished life: every half-witted under-bred man feels triumph at the sound of an *old maid*, and makes his never-ending joke upon *the ladies*. I hope your mother and sisters' value has taught you a respect for the whole sex. I have heard men, whose situation in life made their example of great importance, set the table in a roar with some sarcastic remarks upon virtuous women, occasioned by a mis-shapen

shapen bonnet, or a sentence of false grammar. I have been particular upon this head, as I wish to inculcate, that if a prince of the blood was to choose individual weakness for his sport, a wise man would hold him in contempt. I have much more to say, but we will defer it to another time; strengthen your mind by good resolutions upon what you have heard, and never let me have the misery of knowing I have advised in vain." Charles felt there was just severity enough to make him very much afraid of neglecting the advice, and loved the adviser too well to give him pain.

As they retired to their rooms, "Dear Charles," said Fanny, "what shall I do without you? who will walk with me before breakfast, and read Milton? who will trim my shrubs, and nail them round the arbour?"— "I will, dear Fanny; I should not like

like that any body else should do it ; I will do it all in the holidays, and do not let them grow too fast while I am away." No doubt some moments of anxious reflection upon this subject disturbed the tranquillity of their customary peaceful slumbers.

The next morning at breakfast, Jowler, and Rockwood, and Cerberus, and Don, were vociferated on the lawn before they saw their fox-hunting friend, with his train of dogs, appear at the window. " Halloo ! what, all well to day ? that's right. Not drinking tea, I hope. Tea is the bane of life ; all your girls in these days are nervous : give them good home-brewed beer and a slice of roast beef—What do you think made Queen Bess what she was ?—why beef, to be sure. Could your modern ladies ride on horseback from London to Plymouth to see the Armada with Queen Bess ?"—" Did she

she do it?" said Charles. "She was strong enough, my dear boy; and that's enough for roast beef: she was none of your shilly-shally politicians; she picked out the wisest men in the kingdom to govern it: they were all wise in her time; she made men wise by making it every body's interest to be so. What a list of great men and poets were in her days! Charles, my boy, write them all out by the time I come again; and do you hear, you rogue, put roast beef at the top of the list. Pneumanee's not gone, I hope —never let her go, you will degenerate if you do—so lovely and so good, I never saw met together; no selfishness like other beauties, she is every thing that is attentive and kind."—"Why don't you ask her to live with you sometimes, Sir?" said Charles. "Because she knows better than to live with me and my pointers and setters,

and I know better than to ask her; but I tell you what, young gentleman, if I chose to marry a very young and handsome woman, I would not be laughed out of it by a parcel of jack-a-napes, who would every one wish to have her themselves; I don't know any thing that would tempt me to do it so much, to shew the puppies I despised their raillery, and preferred my own comfort to theirs." He wished he was going to Eton with Charles; he was bred at Eton a hundred years ago himself: "but no, I would not go unless I could take all my inexperience with me; and as that can't be, you shall go without me. Remember the list, however, and be sure to do justice to the beef;" and repeating the injunction, he slipt a note into his hand, and called it a retaining fee for roasting it well.

In the evening there came a note to
the

the Rector in the following style : — “ You and I know, my good friend, that it is the *fashion* for great ones with many thousands a year to think a few hundreds quite enough for a clergyman to breed up a family, and some of them would deprive you of *that*; but I know your value, and how much you must sacrifice to put your boy to Eton. You know *I will have my way*; and so I enclose you a small note to help Charles on *his*. Don’t tell the rogue of it, for I hate to be thanked. *You* have taught me how much more blessed it is to *give* than to *keep*. If you say one word about this to me, d—— me if I do not send you just such another. I can’t bear that such elegant minds as yours should be teased about shillings and pence.

Yours till death,

“ REGINALD MOWBRAY.”

The

The note was a thousand pound, directed, "An humble offering to good sense and virtue."

Such an event gave fresh sunshine to a fine autumnal day; a universal gaiety was every where diffused; the gift was mentioned to Fanny and Charles in a way to increase their esteem for their friend; and in the evening, when Charles talked of his chart, economy was very naturally introduced. "Cicero, if you remember, Charles," said the Rector, "advises his son not to hurt his character by a sordid illiberality, nor his fortune by vain ostentation of magnificence: the first makes a man odious, and deprives him of the power of doing good; the other, by making him necessitous, puts him under the temptation of doing evil. You will have so little to manage, that I shall only say, I have too good an opinion of the feelings and affections

tions of your heart, to suppose you would indulge any whims of yours, to contract the moderate comforts of your mother and sisters." Charles's eyes twinkled. "I know the liberality of your present sentiments," the Rector added, "and I trust I shall always find them the same. Never be guilty of any sort of littleness; I shall furnish you with means for all moderate enjoyments. A gentleman is known by the ease and liberality of his habits and manners; it matters not to the world (for they would not share it with him) if he has thousands a year in prospect, or only a moderate competence before him. Your chart, my dear boy, increases so much upon me, I feel your comfort and happiness so interwoven with my own, that I cannot separate them even upon paper; I must abridge my lessons, and leave to your own discretion the use of your *time*, the most

most important blessing we have to enjoy ; for on the management of it depends *our* expectations, and all *your* prospects and respectability. Here you have a blessing in common with all your school-fellows ; you may distinguish yourself in this as much as you please ; and in a public school, as well as in the world at large, you will find that correct conduct and respectability of character will secure to you an esteem that wealth alone cannot purchase." Charles began to feel himself less in his own opinion than he expected—so much to do, how was it all to be effected ? The Rector went on :—" You inherit a character from your ancestors that it is your duty to support ; they have for centuries been men of honour ; but like all hereditary honours, they are no distinctions at all, unless the heir succeeds to the virtues that acquired them, as well as to the distinctions

distinctions they produced : you will reap but double disgrace if you prove unworthy. There are many minor virtues, which, though not constituting the great features of morality, contribute essentially to the comfort and happiness of society. These you will see marked in your map as little islands ; remembering always, that decorum of manners contributes to secure rectitude of conduct, and that virtue is most lovely in the garb of good humour."

An engagement to the Miss Volatiles took place in the evening ; their brothers were come to spend a few days, and they wished to introduce them to their friends at the Parsonage. The evening was indeed lovely ; such a soft stillness, such mild picturesque clouds, such a concert in the hedges, such a distant tinkling of sheep, such an invigorating freshness in the breeze, and such youthful ardour in Fanny
and

and Charles to discover and enjoy every beauty around them, that their happy mother often reflected with grateful joy, that in the whole creation of blessings they were to her the dearest and the best.

They reached their cottage just as the ladies retired from dinner; the gentlemen were still at their bottle, and seemed in no hurry to leave it, though their sisters repeatedly sent to say their friends were come. "La! my dear creatures," said Miss V. "how unlucky we are! poor aunt is so very ill to day, she can't come down stairs; I was dying to introduce you to her, but she is so poorly."—"Brothers are too much for her," said Mary; "for they do so wrangle about nothing at all, that aunt left the room quite worn out with their nonsense. I suppose they are struggling about some *metaphical deduction*, or somebody's complexion,

or some other body's toothpick-case. Brothers are odd things, an't they, Fanny? I'm sure mine are great plagues, always finding fault with something or other. I hoped, when they came, we should have some amusement; but they are so spoiled by Town gaieties, that they have no relish for country scenes. Mortimer said to-day, there was no one thing in the world could give him pleasure. Balls, plays, concerts, masquerades, all had long since palled upon his taste—all books were dull and uninteresting, and he would give a thousand pounds if he was sure he should never see another."

—“Mortimer, I suppose,” said Fanny, “is a great wag, and tries to see what you will believe.”—“O no, it was very true.” Mary confirmed the truth, and corroborated it by an assertion, that Mortimer had wished the boat in which they sailed in the morning would give them

them a ducking, because the scramble for life would produce some novelty.

Much more was said of the same new and surprising kind. It had never entered into Fanny's conception that any one of the things mentioned could produce satiety ; that moments could hang heavy where a book of history or travels could be found, or where Nature could be surveyed in any of her beauties ; much less did she understand how a scramble for life between brothers and sisters could possibly, either in jest or earnest, be contemplated in a pleasureable light. She sat full of thought, when Charles went quietly behind her chair ; and tapping her gently on the shoulder, said in a low voice, " I am sure you are wishing to change me for Mortimer." Fanny started ; but smiling replied, " You see how the very idea has frightened me." Fanny wished her mamma was come down from the sick

sick lady, who begged to see her alone ; for she was actually afraid to see two fine London gentlemen, for whom this world and all its delights had no enjoyment. She was something relieved by recollecting that they lost in happiness what they gained in refinement ; and adjusting herself in her chair, felt confident that she was enough at her ease to bear an introduction to any *such* men without the least embarrassment. This feeling strengthened itself every moment, and she began to wonder what she had apprehended, when the door opened, and in came two tall fine gentlemen, with an air of *non-chalance* quite new in the village.

“ You are quite in the wrong,” said Wilmot ; “ but you are the most ingenuous advocate : you darken the water round you, like a scuttle-fish, to conceal yourself in its obscurity.”

— “ Pardon me,” said Mortimer ;
“ for

" for if you will allow me to hazard an opinion which I am far from wishing to obtrude (ever feeling a diffidence for my own judgment in competition with those whose age and experience entitle them to attention) ; but may I not venture to say, that you harp so perpetually on the same string, till the harmony is lost, and the vibration discordant : or if I may be allowed to change the metaphor (though the propriety of mixing metaphors is a questionable point), I will take upon me to say, that you remind me of a turnspit ; and while you fancy you are stepping forward, I have no hesitation in saying—(referring always to judgments vastly superior to my own, which I am confident is very crude, and very inferior to many others)—yet upon this occasion, I can have no scruple to affirm, that, after all pawing and scraping, your antagonist finds
you

you for ever in the same spot, exactly where (I was going to say) the cook put you into the wheel."

Where were Fanny and Charles during this alarming harangue? Not accustomed to see the effects of much wine after a hearty meal, still less to know the tendency it produces to carry the failings of a heart and manners to excess, Fanny's fancied ease entirely forsook her: alarmed at what she heard, her cheeks glowed with the deepest crimson. Charles sat playing with his glove, and looking at the sewing, as if he was studying how to make a pair for himself.

" I beg your pardon," said Mortimer to Fanny ; " I really did not see you ; " I am sure I should think too highly of your judgment (for which, no doubt, I shall soon entertain a high respect), and too humbly of myself (with my conscious diffidence of my

my own imperfections), to have given opinions before you so freely, without your entire permission and concurrence. I am afraid you think me very rude?"—"No indeed, Sir," said Fanny; "I do not."—"How can you avoid it, when it must appear to penetration such as, I presume, yours must be, and I am confident you will not think me too presumptuous in asserting, such as I believe it is, that you must have seen I thought only my sisters were in the room?"—"No, Sir," Fanny simply said. "Well then," he continued, "if you did not think of *that*, may I presume to ask (with the humblest opinion of my own interference, and with no presumption founded on the rights of my cause, or dependence upon the strength of my own judgment, compared with the solidity which I can have no doubt I should unquestionably find in yours),
pray

pray what did you think?"—"I thought, Sir," said Fanny, with a briskness unlike herself, as if she wished to put an end to his tiresome harangue; "I thought, if I had two brothers come from London, I should be very glad to see them."—"Indeed you would not," said Miss V. unless they were kinder than Mortimer and Wilmot; they tease us to death. Every thing we say is foolish, and every thing we do is wrong. What tiresome husbands they will make!"—"Husbands!" exclaimed Wilmot; "who can marry in these days?—people can only marry for money, and those who do, wisely provide for a divorce; for it is sure to follow. The ladies must consent to live single: for men cannot afford in these days to marry for love; it is not to be done; it is quite out of every fashionable arrangement. We have done with pastoral

toral scenes ; no more Corydons piping under a tree, or vowing eternal constancy ; no more Celas taking time to prove the affection of a lover : We are a commercial nation ; we trade for our wives as we do for our sugars —sweet commodities ! pleasant to the taste, but likely to produce occasional acidity in the constitution."—"Very witty," said Miss V. as Wilmot strutted about the room, laughing, with his hands in his coat-pocket, pulling them as forward as they would go ; "very witty, Wilmot ; but as I believe all these remarks are quite new to Fanny, I am not sure the wit may not be quite thrown away ; and upon me, for a different reason, because they are so very old, I am tired of hearing them." The gentlemen, united now in one common cause, forgot the subject of the debate when they entered, and began a dissertation upon the advantages women

women in general had over men, the little temptations they had to do wrong, the bad system of their present education, and the very little chance there was of good wives being produced from it. "Yes," said Mortimer exultingly, "though I am very sorry to give an opinion so grating to young ladies, who have evidently other views; and allow me to say, if you will allow the presumption in a person, not perhaps so well qualified to judge upon this subject as more accurate observers might be, yet (as far as my humble opinion may be allowed to go) you will be seen some time hence two fine starched old maids jogging to church side by side of a Sunday, praying that those marriages said to be made in heaven may soon come down."—"Now, Fanny," said Miss V. "did I not tell you how it would be?"—"Indeed you did," said Fanny; "and I thought it

could not be true."—"Smartly said," observed Wilmot; "then you do not mean to lead apes, I suppose, Miss Fanny?" Fanny, whose respect for these gentlemen, was almost lowered to contempt, said, "I do not know what that means, Sir; but I mean, in whatever situation I may be in, to make every body about me as happy as they will let me make them."—"But suppose they will not let you."—"Why then, I dare say, I should lose the inclination and so save myself the mortification of a disappointment."—"Then perhaps you do not intend to marry."—"Indeed, Sir, the subject is quite new to me; my papa and mamma have never talked of it before me, and I have never heard it discussed anywhere else." As there was a general silence, she fancied they still expected her to say something more, and she innocently added, "I suppose I am not

not old enough."—"Not old enough," exclaimed Wilmot, "why, in London young ladies and their mammas talk of little else. Ladies come out to look for a husband; they dress, and dance, and waltz, and think, and talk for husbands; as if they were born and bred for nothing else."

A new idea now struck Fanny. She saw plainly what *coming out* meant, and immediately resolved that she would never come out for such a purpose: No, not even if a journey to London was a part of the ceremony, and always performed with it. Whilst she was fixing this in her mind, and much silly chat was passing around her, two fine laced footmen brought in the tea: a subject of great exultation for the two brothers, that it was ready made; for Mary, who was tea-maker-general, had never made a good cup in her life; and much wit was displayed

upon the subject, that Fanny took not the least part in, and Mortimer, with a patronising air, drew his chair near to hers, saying, "So, Miss Fanny, if you will allow me to make the remark (which I should be very sorry to do, if I was not confident, from the good sense your conversation so evidently evinces, that you will readily forgive, from a judgment so inferior to your own, and from talents, and observation infinitely below what you appear to possess), that you are not yet come out. Fanny, delighted that this harangue closed in something that she could understand, took this fortunate opportunity to express what she now longed to avow, that she *never would come out*. It was impossible to suppress a laugh; and Fanny, finding she had made some mistake, added smiling, "Never for any of the purposes just now mentioned. I am so fond of my home,

home, and all that belongs to it," she added, blushing at her own courage, "that if *coming out* is to alter any part of that system or my opinions of it, I will never wish to see London, or any thing that belongs to it."—"I should like to have the honour of shewing you the lions," said Wilmot, something awed by the simplicity and goodness of her heart, and willing to make amends for the loud laugh that heightened the colour of her natural bloom. She recollected herself, and, with her customary mildness, said, "I should be too ignorant to give pleasure to any body that would escort me; I shall depend upon your arm, Charles" (*to her brother*), "when I may have altered my opinion of London."—"I hope so, dear Fanny," said Charles, half ashamed of his own expression of fondness before gentlemen who were so much more in the world of fashion.



shion, and seemed quite out of such habits. When they were leaving the room, Mortimer came up : " He hoped he should not give offence ; for nothing was farther from his intentions (nor did it become him to dictate about those things, but he thought no care could be too much to prevent mischiefs, where so much the comfort of individuals and whole families were concerned, so deeply concerned as in the present case ; and he was sure it was not confined to his weak judgment, but those for whose opinions he ever had, and ever must, entertain the highest deference, would see it in the same light ; and if he was wrong, he should be very happy to be set right) ; but it appeared to him, that it really would be highly proper that the young ladies should put on additional cloaks, as the evening, though it promised now so fair, might soon alter its appearance ; and in his weak

weak judgment (which as ever ready to submit to those for whom he was ever pleased to express, as became him, a due deference and respect), he conceived the clouds appeared as if they wished to collect, and might, in the present depraved state of human affairs, suddenly burst into showers upon persons so unprotected, unanointed, unannealed, and cruelly wet them much more than would be agreeable, useful, or ornamental."

Charles said, as soon as they had left the house, that the brother, who seemed to live in a parenthesis, was the most intollerable proser he had ever seen ; and was sorry his friends did not tell him that in his case the half would be much better than the whole. As they detailed to their mamma all the chat of the evening they could remember, she pointed out the innumerable advantages and pleasures they would receive

receive throughout their lives, from having their enjoyments dealt out sparingly: for those who possessed great wealth seized every pleasure, and pursued it till the relish was lost; while their humbler friends long enjoyed their taste without satiety. "So Providence," she added, "kindly distributes its innumerable blessings more impartially than we are generally aware of. Charles could not conceive what could make brothers and sisters hate each other so much. "My dear Charles," said his mother, "that sort of appearance which you call snarling is no proof of hatred; it is an ill-bred vulgar habit that some gentlemen indulge themselves in, from a mistaken idea that they amuse their hearers; and they care not at whose expense, forgetting the strong prejudice every feeling mind must form against the heart that is gratified at such a price.

I have

I have sometimes met with people who endeavour to entertain you with the failings and imperfections of their whole family. Those who must talk at all events grow careless of whom and what they are talking: if you will but listen, it is all they require; and knowing most of their nearest connections, they naturally talk most about them. Some families keep a sort of sharp-shooting at each other, as if they were the bitterest enemies, and keep every body present uneasy, while they are really the very best of friends; and as soon as the scene closes, love each other with a due proportion of affection."

" How they laughed and talked of ladies!" said Charles; " how much I am obliged to papa for telling me how wrong and vulgar it is! I felt the truth of his remarks, and I had a great mind to ask if they would see the

chart, to know how they ought to think upon such a subject; but they were so tall and so well dressed, that I fancied Louis the Fourteenth was just such another man, and as fine a gentleman. I wish they had not been so cross and severe to their sisters. Papa has told me that retirement is unfavourable to conversation, and intellect was liable to degenerate for want of exercise; but surely London gentlemen can have no such excuse."

The evening was a most delightful moonlight, and cast such fine shadows from the trees as they passed, and shone so resplendent on the sea when they came near it, that they were tempted to take a walk upon the beach, where they ardently wished for Pneumance's return, to tell her all they had seen and heard since her departure. Some time passed on without any event at the Parsonage worth transcribing, till

till one morning at breakfast Pneumaneé returned. All most joyfully welcomed her, kissed her hands, her lips ; told her of all the events that happened in her absence, of Mr. Mowbray's notes, of Miss Volatiles' brothers, of Charles's going to school, and every little occurrence that had severally interested them. She heard one, caressed another, took a third upon her lap, and entered with the most endearing kindness into all their little affairs. A carpet had been laid in the arbour on purpose for her ; a new kind of basket worked with ribbon, for her to pick shells on the beach ; and Charles had turned a very pretty necklace, which was immediately put on by himself, and all was gaiety and joy throughout the day. In the evening when the little ones were gone to bed, Fanny requested Pneumaneé to tell them some of her visits during her absence. "By all means," she said.

"My

" My first was to the young lady's mother, who you remember went to Scotland to marry a man against the knowledge of her parents."—"O yes," said Fanny; " I well remember how sorry I was for her and her poor dear papa and mamma!"—" You will be more sorry now, my dear Fanny, because she herself must be so. She begged, on her return from Scotland, to be allowed to bring her husband to her happy home; but was desired by her parents to leave them some time to recover the shock they had received, in finding their darling child sought other protection than theirs; adding they were at present too unhappy, their sorrows too recent, it would damp her bridal hours to witness it. They solemnly forgave her for such a breach of duty, and only reproached themselves for not acting up to the affection they felt, or she could never

so have left them: The gentleman, it seems, was disconcerted at this: as his friends were in Ireland, and he could not leave his regiment to take her to them, she went to barracks with him; and after many supplicating entreaties, at the end of a year, she was received at home, and I was requested to be of the party. I would not witness the first interview; I went the day after; her mother welcomed me with tears, which she quickly wiped away, and led me to the nursery, where her daughter sat with her sleeping infant on her lap. ‘See,’ said she, ‘what a sweet little grand-daughter I have! bless her, Pneumanee,’ she continued; ‘for your blessing will secure her from mischief.’ The young and interesting mother sighed deeply, and held out her hand, but could not speak. ‘I do bless her,’ I said, ‘with all my heart;

may

may she prove a lasting source of comfort to you both !'

" 'I dare not hope she will be a comfort to me,' said the mother, kissing her infant's hand; I have not deserved it. Bid her avoid her mother's fatal example; she cannot have a path in life so smooth, so rosy as mine, and I have filled it with briars and thorns. 'Be comforted,' said her mother, 'your father and I will make it the object of our future lives to make you happy.'— 'You have always done so,' she replied; 'and I have done all in my power to make you miserable.'— 'Say no more, my dear child; my heart bleeds for your feelings; promise me that you will forget all that is past.'— 'I would, my dear madam; but this dear innocent will remind me every hour of what you felt for me; and what you have received as your re-

ward. Oh, could she but know my agonies! she would then avoid my cruel conduct.'

"When I recollect, added Pneumane, "the short space since I had seen her, the young and blooming darling of the fondest, most indulgent parents, and now the mourning dejected mother of an infant whose very smiles would add reproaches to her heart, I could scarcely bear the scene. We were summoned to dinner, and I hoped that her husband's affectionate tenderness would soon wear off the dejection she appeared to feel.

"He was not returned from his walk; he had gone out immediately after breakfast, and left no word where he was going. 'It was my fault, I believe, my dear, (*to his daughter*), I ought to have told him our dinner hour, and that we are very exact to it.' — 'I told the gentleman, Sir,' said the butler. 'He did not hear it,' my friend

friend said. ‘Yes, Sir, he did; for he said, Very well.’—‘Take out the dinner again, and keep it as warm as you can till the gentleman comes.’ The daughter said not a word, but looked through the avenue from which she expected to see him. How different, my dear Fanny,” said Pneumaniée, “from the behaviour of a happy woman who had married the husband of her parent’s choice as well as her own! With what confidence would such an one plead for the absentee, or join in some plan to mortify the delinquent; secure of his partiality for any plot that might be imagined against him. But here all was silence and mortification, and time for distressing reflections. After waiting nearly an hour, the dinner was again ordered, and new remarks upon the absence, lest some accident should have happened. Where was the lively interest that a young and happy mother would

would have felt for the father of her child, if but the shadow of a hair-breadth's danger had been suggested to her? It was not here: a sort of wild half-drawn sigh escaped her; it would have said, Mine is the heart that would have been alive to that alarm, if— if—the object was deserving.

"When the comfortless meal was nearly over, in came a die-dapper coxcomb, taking off his gloves and hat, and throwing them upon a chair, with a fear that he was late. 'No, faith!' he added, taking out his watch; 'not so late as I expected. I was three miles from here half an hour ago—it is confoundedly hot,' wiping his face; 'you will never guess where I have been: why, I'll tell you bye and bye. Pray, dear, (*to his wife*), give me something that is hottest—how does poppet do? does your dad think her like me?—Oh, this is stone cold!—

Some

Some of that veal, if that is not cold too.'—'Orde in the chickens,' said the lady. 'Aye do, Granny,' said he; 'they may be better.' When they came, he said they were roasted to a cinder. 'It is your own fault,' said his wife; 'the dinner has been ready nearly two hours.'—'There you are out for once,' he replied; 'it was your fault, for I have been looking over your estate.'—'My estate?' said she, with an air of dejection. 'Yes, yours, my dear; and what's yours is mine, you know.'—'I know of no estate.'—'Oh, you don't, do you?' said he; and twisting his person in his chair, with an air of importance, added, 'I never saw finer acres in my life. I met the bailiff, and asked if he would shew me about it; he was civil, and told me every thing, thinking, I suppose (a cunning dog), I might be his master soon.' His wife could bear it no longer:

longer : painful reflections tortured her heart :—an estate so soon to be his, at the death of so dear a father ! a death her conduct would probably hasten : and the unfeeling man to whom she had trusted the comfort and happiness of her life, had found the surest way of destroying it. She had promised herself that her unremitting endeavours would restore her much-loved parents' tranquillity ; and to see them so wounded through her means was bitterness indeed. She wiped away a falling tear. ‘ Did the bailiff tell you, Sir,’ said her father, in a tone of voice softened by his fear of giving his daughter pain, ‘ that the estate he seems to know so well, is settled upon male heirs ; and in default of mine, goes to a nephew who well deserves the inheritance.’—‘ Gad so !’ says he ; ‘ he never mentioned a word of that : you never told me a word of that, pet,’

looking

looking at his wife. ‘I never knew it,’ she said; ‘and if I had, I should probably never have mentioned it: I meant to be married for my own sake.’—‘True,’ said he; ‘but a good estate is a good part of the marriage-ceremony, for all that. I should like to see the writings when you are at leisure,’ he added; ‘there may be some flaw; and egad! I like to take every thing the law will give me, right or wrong—that’s fair; don’t you think so, ma’am?’ turning to me. I delayed answering, in the hope he would answer himself; but he repeated, in a louder key, as if I was deaf, ‘Don’t you think so, ma’am?’—‘No indeed, Sir; I do not think so: the law of honour would be stronger with me than any other law: it is of a sensible and delicate nature, and would scorn to enjoy any property which it was the declared or implied intention of the owner

owner to give to any body else.' He was silent, and I added, 'I have always lamented when I have heard families deprived of estates and property long possessed, because lawyers have been careless or ignorant of their duty.'—' Well, I am quite of another way of thinking,' he said; ' I shall like to see the writings :' and then leaning his elbows upon the table, and resting his thrown-up chin upon his hands, he remained silent with an occasional supercilious shake of the head, as if he was valuing his own conceits, and despising every body about him."— "How was it possible," said Fanny, "for such a young lady, so beloved, to marry such a man?"—" It is the most unaccountable thing in the world," said Pneumanee. " I am so afraid," continued Fanny, " that I may be miserable enough to get such an insensible wrong-headed husband ! what can one do

do to escape it?"—"Why, my dear girl, always suspect your own judgment; when you first perceive a gentleman's partiality, you probably see him as he is; then form your judgment and abide by it. If you wait till you become pleased with his attentions, your judgment is not worth a pin; it is all gone, and your best friends will scarcely have influence enough to bring it back again. Never marry with an idea that things you do not like may mend; depend upon it, that what you do not quite approve before you are married, you will still less approve afterwards.

"I will spare you any more of this unhappy family at present; only assuring you that the mother was as affectionate as yours, and the daughter as happy and grateful as yourself,"—"Oh," exclaimed Fanny, "it is like Eve fallen from Paradise!" Charles, who

who had sat very quiet in a great chair at the end of the sofa where they were sitting, started up, and declared he had never heard of such an unfeeling monster in his life: why, he was ten times worse than the new-married lady: she only tormented her husband, but this fellow plagues a whole family at once. I hope there is no flaw in the writings?"—"Oh no, Charles; certainly not," said Pneumane. "Is he tall or short?"—"Oh, a miserable, ill-looking, vulgar man."—"How could she marry him?"—"Aye, Charles; every body asks that question, and nobody can answer it. When you marry, let both the person and character of your wife answer such inquiries for you."—"I will ask your opinion, Pneumane, and take it too."—"You shall have it candidly; but then you will follow your own, for people always do upon those occasions."—

sions."—"I shall have profited very little from your society if I do. Well," he added, "I shall go to bed; I wish I may dream that I meet that man, and am strong enough to lick him."—"Suppose you take up your horse whip," said Fanny, "I should rejoice to hear you use it." The Rector, smiling, bid his visionary children haste to bed.

The next day they were to spend at a simple cottage, about four miles distant, upon an enchanting little spot, where an old servant, who had married from the nursery, and had bred up the elder children, had now a family of her own. The family at the Parsonage spent one day in every year with Nanny; the anniversary was come, and preparations of many little presents made for the purpose. The morning was very fine; and as Nanny was famous for the excellence of her breakfast-cakes, it was

was a regular request that they would be in time to eat them hot from the oven. The Rector, his wife, and four eldest children, and Pneumanee, cheerfully took the walk to gratify their old and faithful servant. Upon the summit of a cliff, quite embosomed in trees, rose the simple cottage: the population consisted of the aged father, the husband, his wife, and three infant boys, all looking so rosy and cheerful, that Health herself, in all her bloom and vigour, seemed to reside among them. Between the trees you saw the ocean spread its bold surface to the clouds; a few fishing boats only interrupting the view of the immeasurable expanse. A little field of grass, where their cow was grazing, and a garden, crowding together flowers and fruits in tolerable abundance, composed their riches, and appeared to supply all their wants. The inside of

cottage was neat and cheerful: all were so happy, Nanny's breakfast so good, and so much gaiety in every countenance, that it was impossible not to be pleased. The little presents made the boys so gay, that Nanny could not believe they were not troublesome. Many were the stories she told of what Miss Fanny had said, and Master Charles had done, in their infancy: God bless them both! how much they were grown!

As Nanny's husband was a fisherman, the dinner was chiefly composed of the produce of his labour; and while it was dressing, Nanny requested they would walk to a poor gentleman's house that was very near; she had seen a great deal of life, and was exceedingly pious and good. When the dinner was ready, she would send one of the children to tell them of it; for she knew the ladies would not like it the better for seeing it dressed.

Never

Never did a walk produce more pleasure. A lady sat reading by the fire, and under locks of snow, presented a face of exquisite composure. Never was seen a more benign or intelligent countenance: she was the last, remaining child of a numerous family. "Providence," she said, "had been pleased to rescue them from the agony of surviving all they had dearly loved." Never was there a more graceful manner. Time, with the cruel addition of extreme distress, and very small means to supply the necessities of life; altogether, had not robbed her of the early habits and impressions of her youth. A natural easy flow of language, a subdued kind of cheerfulness, and a high sense of the protection and goodness of Providence, made her conversation the most engaging thing that can be imagined. It was impossible not to respect her, in spite of

the plainness of her dress, and the scarcity of comforts about her. She had a servant who had lived with her in happier days, and, now almost too old to work, had as few wants and wishes as herself, and was quite as fit to enjoy the sort of life she was compelled to lead. The good creature, she said, delighted to recal to her recollection former times, and reminded her but too often of what gave her pain; but she knew her motives were good, she never checked her, and as she considered silence as a licence to go on, her stories seldom finished till they produced a flood of tears. She was a sad historian, she added, but the best-hearted creature in the world; she was grieved that her last years should be so limited in comforts. We collected that she was herself an officer's widow, had been a great traveller with her husband, had lost a darling child

in

in Germany, the scene of many of the old woman's remarks; that her husband had long lingered after being wounded in battle; that some flaw in his grand-father's will had opened a torrent of law upon her at his death; that delays and vexation ended at last in losing his whole property; he had no right even to make a jointure, which was given up; and she soon after lost her last and dearest little girl. She had only the comfort left (which indeed was balm to all her sufferings, and for which she could never be sufficiently grateful), that her husband left her in perfect ignorance of the poverty that awaited her. Every eye but hers was filled with tears: these scenes of misery and sorrow had too long dwelt upon her mind to raise a new sensation, and the sources of her tears had already been exhausted. When Nanny's messenger announced

announced the dinner, the dear woman was earnestly pressed to be of the party, but she declined it. They thought and talked of nothing else: as they walked home, the Rector determined to apply to some of those people (and they were to be found, he said) who would manage to make such a woman happy, as far as money could do it, without wounding her feelings. He reckoned up at least a dozen; but so many objections arose, some had very large families, others had already done so much, others so little inclined to hear tales of sorrow, and might say, The present object was too well satisfied to require their assistance; that it was soon found there were not above three of the number, to whom he could apply with any reasonable hopes of success.

"Spare yourself, my dear Sir," said Pneumancee, "any farther anxiety; I have

have forbore to suggest to you the privileges with which I am invested : for I wished you and yours to value me for my own sake. I have a friend, who, blessed with all the high distinctions of birth, rank, and beauty; whose virtues are pre-eminent as her rank ; whose smiles are ever ready to approve and cheer the unhappy and distressed ; whose attachment to her family has had the most severe and heart-rending trial, and has been the proud theme of all who know how to appreciate her worth : to such a Princess I am an almoner. I shall have the honour of suggesting such a quarterly sum as you will recommend ; it will be immediately remitted ; and from such a source the most delicate feelings can never take the alarm.' The children had walked on before, or Pneumanee would have been more reserved ; with the friends she was with,

she

she knew her communication was safe : but if her influence was once known, her life would be a system of refusing those who feel they have a right to apply for places, and pensions, and money, merely because they wish for (perhaps) all three.

It something dazzled the good Rector and his wife, and it must be owned that in the retirement of their own chamber, the probability of Pneumanee's getting an additional living, some day, to add to the Parsonage, or a provision for Charles, or might not a pair of lawn-sleeves be in her contemplation ? for, no doubt, at court such things were very easy to be had ; and the Rector's wife had known bishops not half so fit for their mitres as her husband.

Pneumanee left them the next morning, fit agent for Charity herself. So active, so warm and zealous an advocate

gate! who does not with joy follow her in a visit of such interest and importance? who cannot fancy the kind reception she met with from youth and beauty equal to her own? who does not see the sparkling eye of joy, on the one part, from the conscious power of doing good, to relieve such a widow's heart, a heart so deeply wounded. Oh, that she could *but pour a balm, that could minister comfort to her mind's disease, and pluck from her memory her rooted sorrow!*" But she would amply supply her wants, relieve her from her anxiety for her old servant, and herself of the painful necessity of attending to trifles: and who does not see Pneumanee's heart beat high with gratitude, when she heard the prompt interest taken in her request. "Send her, my dear Pneumanee," said the Princess, "with the sum you think so equivalent to her wants."

wants, a box of books; I will order another of apparel suited to my sense of her merit rather than to her circumstances: and I will have a complete suit for the poor old servant, and I lament I shall not be present to see her wear it. As it may be some way objectionable to the widow's feelings to receive such presents, tell her that merit like hers secures her the friendship of a Princess who is pleased with an opportunity of supplying her wants." Pneumanee seized a hand so fair, kissed it warmly, and expressed her happiness in being known to so much excellence. "Rather, Pneumanee," she replied, "let me rejoice in having your more than human aid to protect me from the eye of malice, the malignity of scandal, and the cruel voice of envy; to which, on the pinnacle I stand, I am naturally exposed: to your friendship and protection I owe
this

this security, more dear to me than all my earthly proud pre-eminence." Pneumanee assured her favourite, that it was her own merit and virtues that protected her; for though her influence was unbounded to those who, with a pure mind and exalted merit, soought her assistance; to the undeserving and incorrect she would never waste a moment. "Conduct like yours," Pneumanee continued, "disarms envy, hatred, and malice: if they all opened in a battery against you, truth would make its way; the world cannot assail with any chance of success such a character as yours; the harmless arrows would fall to the ground, and you would stand secure amidst a failing world."

Much delightful intercourse passed between friends so lovely and beloved, till Pneumanee, who knew the jealousies and anxieties attached to the idea of

of a favourite, the whisperings and insinuations that bring every thing and every character that may be considered as rising into favour, into disrepute; the constant bickerings about smiles, and nods, and winks, and nothings, that attend the suburbs of a court, took her leave; and only upon such occasions as now to the Rector and his wife in confidence, ever revealed the subject of their frequent meetings. The Parsonage was cheered by Pneumancee's return and this account of her success.

The subject now was, how all this should be conveyed to the widow, without giving pain to those feelings too proud to ask relief? and who that saw and heard her converse, could dare to offer it? It was settled that a week should elapse, till the boxes should arrive and prepare the way; directed inside, as they were, *to suffering*

fering virtue. It would be indelicate to witness her first surprise.

The week soon slipped away, when the younger children were left at home ; the Rector, his wife, Pneumanee, and Fanny, walked to Nanny's cot, and expected to hear something of the widow's present. Boxes had been seen going into the house, but not a word had transpired ; they went on to the cottage, and soon were told of the unbounded wealth they contained. Such linen ! such clothes ! such books ! and a bundle of all new things directed for an old and faithful servant ! " Dear me," said the old woman, " they must be for us ; our very names were upon them all, there could be no doubt they were for us ; but Mistriss cried, and nailed them all up again. I tried some of the things for me, and they fit so well ! but I was not to take one bit, though I wanted every thing, as you

you may see, ladies," putting by her patch-worked apron. "They are all for you," Pneumanee said. — "Are they indeed, madam?" — "God bless Mistriss, I'll call her; she is only walking by the sea; she walks there every day; we landed at that point when we came from Germany, and the captain never walked so far afterwards; and every day when Mistriss comes back, I says, Ah, good luck, you have been thinking of Master, when he landed there, looking so pale; and your dear little girl, who was so giddy. — Good woman, Mistriss says, I am in no danger of forgetting the one or the other." — "Surely," said the Rector, "you had better not put her in mind of these things." — "Lord bless you, Sir! why she likes it; it is meat and drink to her; I always contrives to make her cry before we go to bed; they says that crying does people as much good as

as their victuals, and, sure enough, it does ; for my Mistress has sometimes nothing else but tears to live on—but I'll go and gladden her heart—but she's desperate proud. Some years ago she had a hundred-pound note, and though all she had in the world would not sell for half the sum, she sent it back ; not much liking where it came from, I believe.—How I did fret when I saw it put into a letter, and sealed to go to the post ; God forgive me ! but I had a wicked thought in my head to take out the note, and send the letter on without it, knowing whoever sent it could well spare it, and nobody wanted it so much as we did." It was not easy to prevent smiling at such convenient morality ; and to avoid farther histories of temptations and resistance, they took her directions for the shortest way to the beach ; glad of the opportunity to
save

save the interesting widow some of her old domestic's heart-rending remarks : they found her near the spot where the servant said, they had landed from Germany.

It was impossible not to reverence a person contemplating, through so many past years, such an interesting source of her sorrows ; not to feel how deep the affliction must have been, that time, with all its changes and chances, could not obliterate. She met the party with such a benign smile, and such a peaceful resigned countenance, as if contemplation had reconciled her mind to all its woes. Kind greetings on all sides were sincere ; they expected she would every moment mention the boxes, but her mind having dwelt on higher objects, could not immediately unbend to the things of this life. As they approached her cottage, the recollection naturally returned,

turned; and she said, that from some mistake some boxes had been directed to her, and we might probably know somebody of her name, for it was impossible to be hers. Pneumanee, with extreme delicacy, told her to whom she was obliged: she could not immediately speak. There was a time, she at last calmly said, when such a distinction would have heightened all her joys to ecstacy; but it was the painful pre-eminence of affliction to turn every new blessing into sorrow, when you stood unconnected to enjoy them. "I am not insensible," she said, "to such extreme kindness; but I have long indulged in the severe privations to which I have been exposed; they have gratified some of my weaknesses, and I am not sure that they have not greatly contributed to my tranquillity." She talked of keeping a few of the things, and gratefully

fully returning the rest, as more than she could ever want. Pneumanee, whose persuasive eloquence was irresistible, convinced her of the impossibility of sending any thing back, and said much to reconcile her to the use and wear of all she had received ; and to increase her pleasure in her books, assisted in unpacking and arranging them upon shelves already empty to receive them. She told the old domestic, the bundle she saw was all her own ; she grinned a smile of anxious doubt and fear ; and when the Rector confirmed it, to whom she appealed for the truth, she found a hundred good reasons, from her dreams, and crickets, and various other ministers of fate, who had been actively employed as heralds of good news, to be very sure that it was true.

It was impossible not to be highly diverted at seeing her, soon after, come into

into the room, full dressed in her new clothes, and appealing to us all, and turning round to confirm her opinion, that they fitted nicely. God help her! she said, her last new gown was put on in Germany; she should never forget the day, they were all so happy. The widow, dreading what would come next, bid her go quickly and unpack the other box, that the ladies might see the contents. "Aye," says she, "that I will—it was the day that the French, that fatal day, that my dear —— The Rector stepped forward, put his hand to her lips, and bid her make haste to do as her mistress had bid her: she whispered him that a little crying would do her a great deal of good. The widow, who knew well all that was passing, smiled at her simplicity: her feelings were too conversant with her afflictions to find any new cause for grief, and too sincere to admit any . of

of its prompts and circumstances. Much was said by the group, as they parted, of gratitude on the one side, of admiration and respect on the other. In the way home the Rector remarked, that it had been very well said by some wise man, that nobody lives too long who suffers with resignation what Providence is pleased to inflict ; and that the gods themselves must look down with pleasure upon such a resigned and tranquil spirit.

Pneumancee, whose active, generous spirit appeared to receive fresh elasticity from every kindness she had done, and every heart she had cheered, tripped over the cliffs with an airy lightness that seemed as if she scarcely touched the earth. Fresh plans of benevolence occupied her thoughts ; and we have much to lament that so many interruptions in the family-manuscript, from the natural occurrences, that so often

often engaged the hours of a domestic woman devoted to her family, should have deprived us of a single day, or a single anecdote, in which Pneumancee was concerned. The time was now rapidly advancing when Charles was to go to school. Fanny had often thought about it with great apprehension and dread; but, as Pneumancee as well as her mamma had told her, it was in her own power to acquire a firmness of mind which was very necessary to meet with propriety the vicissitudes of life, by resisting every idea that would soften and enervate her feelings, she had forborne to speak of it; and as cheerfulness of temper was perpetually represented to her as the real *beaume de la vie*, she determined never to mention the subject as a grievance. The widow's resignation under sorrows so real strengthened all these resolutions; and she wrote in her pocket-book that the mind that was not exercised

exercised in difficulties could not withstand them. By such means she fixed in herself a style of thinking that was of use to her through her life—never to see objects or circumstances but in the best light they could possibly be placed ; to consider that if it rains to-day, the sun may come out with renewed light and heat to-morrow ; that we may form our minds to grief or joy ; and that it should be her invariable plan to raise her thoughts above those trifles that would otherwise perpetually disturb them. With these heroic feelings she shewed Pneumane what she called her *high resolves*, and met her kindest approbation.

In the evening, when the little ones, tired with play and the various employments and exertions of the day, readily obeyed their summons to bed, and Charles had taken up a play of Shakespeare's to read to the party ; the Rector bid him put it by, and tell him if

if he had settled in his mind what profession he should like to follow, that he might have it in view in his future studies. Charles, with his natural frankness, said, he should like to be a clergyman in the country, with a pretty Parsonage like his, a good garden, a snug little gig, and plenty of time to read, to see his friends, and to receive them as comfortable, and be as much respected and beloved, as his papa. Pneumanee smiled; Charles caught her eye, and blushed at his catalogue of wishes, lest there should be something wrong about them. The Rector, with great mildness, replied, that a wise and good man, in making choice of *his* profession, was influenced by higher motives than these, or any interest, or any preferment: he considers that his employment will be the noblest and the most delightful, that of leading men, by mild and persuasive

sive reasoning, to their true happiness; Charles now saw clearly why Pneumanee smiled ; and the blush that had had nearly faded on his cheek, was heightened by a strong sense of shame.

Pneumanee saw the uneasiness she had occasioned, and never voluntarily gave a moment's pain to the good and amiable. " I smiled, Charles," she said, " at the pretty placid picture of perfect enjoyment you so feelingly described. I wish every good clergyman to be in the full possession of such real comforts; but alas ! I know too well the many claims they have upon their moderate incomes : they have seldom more than sufficient to defray their current expenses, and many of my friends who have faithfully and diligently discharged their important trust for a series of years are left, with large families, to the heart-rending sorrow of knowing that they

they are totally unprovided for. In the present state of society," she added, "an appearance suited to their situation in life is essential to be preserved, and cannot be maintained without a liberal provision; and some of the most valuable members of the community are so straitened by the severe expenses attached to all livings, by the examples of charity they must necessarily set to their parishioners, by repairs of old houses, and by various claims, that their lives, and the duties of them, are embittered by the certainty that they must leave their families distressed." The Rector sighed deeply; he sighed for the many excellent men he knew to be so circumstanced.

Pneumance finding an entire silence, followed her remarks; and fearing Charles would think her averse to his

choice from what she had said, continued: "The Christian religion, Charles, ennobles and enlarges the mind beyond any other religion or science whatever. There the perfection of the Deity, the nature and excellency of virtue, the dignity of the human soul, are displayed in the largest characters; and I should be most happy to see you so circumstanced, that you might have leisure and peace of mind to enjoy all the blessings that such contemplations must secure." The Rector's eyes were steadily fixed upon the ground; Charles sat motionless. "But my heart grieves to tell you," continued Pneumanee, "that the time is not far off, when mistaken zeal, in its way to fancied reformation, will degrade and oppress the clergy, by restraints that will lower their sacred profession in the eyes of the people, and

and tend to interrupt the peace and harmony subsisting between themselves.

The Rector started from his chair, "God forbid," says he; then recollecting that Pneumance could not be mistaken, he mildly added: "It is the nature of our profession, like its divine teacher, to bear injuries and oppression without murmuring; but our Church is built upon a rock, and we have guardians who will be proud to defend it." Pneumance was silent: she recollected, perhaps, that she had said more than was quite necessary for those who would not anticipate evils, and added: "Would not such things, if they did happen, Charles, interrupt the scenes you had pictured to yourself?"— "Quite blast them," he said; "if they humbled me in my own opinion, I should never preach with spirit: I

meant to be loved and respected like papa."—"I think you would," she said; "but it is right you should be prepared for changes so new and unexpected: for when you become old, or too decrepid to do your duty, however diligently your whole life may have been employed in it, when your children may want more than usual means to establish them, even humbly in the world; will your philosophy support you under giving up a large portion of your income, (and under some circumstances, the whole), to have the duty done for you? Can you readily subscribe to a law that may reduce you and your family to want and despair?"—
"God forbid," said the Rector, "that Charles should live to experience so great a calamity." Pneumanee diverted the subject into other channels, and highly entertained the party till their evening closed, followed by a

tranquil

tranquil night, known only to the innocent and good.

The next morning the Miss Volatiles and their brothers made, what they called, a forcible entry into the Parsonage; full of questions and answers to themselves ; it was some minutes before any body could speak, or distinctly hear what was said—so many dear creatures ; so many complaints of what Wilmot had said, and Mortimer had done—but, thank God ! they were both going away, and were come to take their leave. Charles, whose first emotion was to run and feed his rabbits as soon as he saw the party, but remembered that his mother would never allow the vulgar habit of running from her guests, said out, very frankly, “ Why you make your brothers cross by always saying they will be so.”—“ A sensible fellow,” said Wilmot, and shook him by the hand ; “ *your* sisters know

know better, do they not, Charles?"—
“I am sure,” said Charles, “I should not love them at all if they did not.”—“Oh,” said Mortimer, “if you will allow me to hazard an opinion, with great deference to so many superior judgments, infinitely excelling my proudest hopes of equalling their excellence, for no person ought to be more diffident of themselves, and I humbly trust that I am fully sensible of my own insufficiency; yet I must say, that the best brothers and sisters, the best husbands and wives, are too apt to play this shuttle-cock sort of wit, and not appear to lose any of the cordial attachment to each other, with which they appear to begin the game.”—“An odd way,” Charles said, “of amusing themselves and their friends!”—“There are other husbands and wives,” Wilmot said, “and those perhaps much pleasanter in society,

ciety, who never speak to each other at all; are very pleasant to their friends, but maintain an obstinate silence to each other. A friend of mine," he added, " has not spoken to his wife for some years, but through the medium of his dog. 'Fopling,' he would say, 'I am going to dine with a friend to-day, and shall not be at home till midnight.'—'Fopling,' the lady would answer, ' it is a matter of the utmost indifference to me where you go; I have a friend coming to dine with me, and I do not care a straw when you return.' Fopling took it very well, bore many sarcastic remarks with extreme good humour; and set them both a better example by never barking at either, however much they deserved it."—"I wish you would get a Fopling, Wilmot," said his sisters. " If he did," said Mortimer, " you would teach him to snarl." Pneumanee, who thought

thought no time so fatally lost, as in listening to family-feuds, because, as both parties were generally wrong, it produced a natural dislike to them all, remembered a lady's dog of the same name; but her Fopling was the grand object of her attention: he had a dozen damask napkins for his own use; had a regular hot dinner every day at one o'clock, to which a servant as regularly called him; and when he came in with the desert, which he uniformly did, he had the two great chairs (in which his accommodating friends always dined) put together to make a sofa for his evening's nap; he was, happily for him, the medium of their mutual affection and fondness, and greatly contributed to their domestic felicity.—A foolish pair, they called them.—“No indeed,” said Pneumanees, “it was a great weakness in very well informed minds, and was a striking

a striking instance of the error of indulging such frivolous conduct; for they lost by it the good opinion they well deserved, and had a right to claim from society, from their unquestionable merit in other respects."

Mortimer took up a Shakspeare that lay upon the table, and heard Charles had been reading *As You Like It*; and they requested Wilmot would finish it. He could not for millions read a play aloud, he never did; but Mortimer had the book in his hand, why should he not read it? Mortimer hoped he might presume to assure them, what he trusted they would be as ready to believe as he was to assert it, that whenever he read aloud, which he must beg leave to assure them, he had in vain attempted to do for several years past; but whenever he did make the effort, it generally ended as it begun, which he was sorry to say was

in a very bad style ; for somehow or other, he could not account why or wherefore, but it always made him unaccountably hoarse.

Charles, who had been bred up in the habit of reading aloud whenever he was asked, and took pleasure in amusing the ladies while they worked, stared with fixed astonishment at gentlemen too fine to be well bred and obliging. He began to doubt the propriety of his own conduct, till he fancied he saw something so frivolous and even fliprant about these very gay men, that that he was convinced they were not proper models for imitation ; indeed he began to doubt if they had any right to the character of gentlemen ; perhaps they only passed in the country, where they were not known, for characters so important. Convinced of this by his own reasoning, he resolutely walked out to his rabbits, and

was

was very much surprised to learn from Pneumane, after they were gone, that they really were men of considerable fortune and education, and very well received in society ; but finding in the gay world that frivolous chat and nonsense answered their purpose mighty well, they gave themselves no trouble to acquire better ornaments of mind ; and probably they could not read a play with pleasure to themselves or to their auditors.

No wonder Charles thought it strange, for he had been taught to think that education would qualify him for the highest walks in life ; and by enabling him to do well whatever was done at all, would make the greatest distinction between a gentleman and a man of low rank in the world. And who could contribute highly to the pleasantries of society, who could not occasionally read aloud ? " How many winter :

winter evenings," said Fanny, " has it passed away delightfully, when we should otherwise have grown dull from hearing the east winds blow, and the waves furiously roar."—"True, dear Fanny," said Charles; "and I hope I shall never be too fine a man to repeat the pleasure as often as you wish it, through many an eastern wind and roaring sea."

Soon after the party left the Parsonage, they had a visit from an elderly lady of rank, who, Charles said, was almost a relation, near enough to claim a connection when she was pleasant, and when cross, distant enough to disclaim it.

She came in with such a detail of her aches and ailings, so much bile, that her Ladyship could neither eat, drink, or sleep with it. She was to have been this very day at Exeter, at Land's, where accommodations were prepared

prepared for her, but she could not go—it was very provoking—the more provoking, as she had taken every prescription she could possibly get, some hundreds of medicines, and was the worse for them all.—“ Dear Madam,” said Fanny, “ leave them all off, and trust to air and exercise.”—“ The worst things in the world,” she said, “ it stirred up the bile.”—“ Pray lie a-bed ma’am,” says Charles, “ an’t that good ?”—“ No, child, that is ten times worse.”—“ Then pray, ma’am,” says he, “ what is bile ? it seems like a jack-a-lanthorn, there is no catching it.”—“ Catch it, child !” she exclaimed, “ no, there’s no catching it, it runs every where; a bilious headache one day, a bilious stomach, or a bilious fever the next, then it jumps upon your spirits, and keeps them so low, that there’s no escaping it any where. I was so ill Monday, such a head-

a head-ache; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday so miserable; and now I could not have come out, but to tell you how ill I have been with this melancholy bile. It is nothing but bile, I assure you; you may depend upon it, it is nothing else; and as soon as I go back, I shall take an emetic."—
" You had better take it as quick as possible," said Charles, " lest this sad bile should grow too strong to be conquered." Oh, she had taken plenty of calomel to keep it in subjection, conquered it could never be.

Pneumanee said, smiling, she heard the best remedy was never to mention the word. Oh, that was a great mistake, for she knew from experience that every time she said the word bile, it lessened in her stomach. Charles archly said, it increased in his.—
" Does it indeed," she said;—" well, I have at least a hundred receipts for its.

its cure ; I will send them all to you ; and, take my word for it, when you have tried them all for seven years, you stand a very good chance of having more bile than you had at first."—"I do not doubt it," he said ; "but you would have been much worse if you had not tried them all ; you may depend upon that."

"Is it possible," said Fanny, as soon as the bilious history was finished with the old lady's visit, "is it possible for a woman who holds such a rank in society to be so absurd ? We must lament her sufferings, but our pity is wounded, and almost lost, by such a lengthened detail of pains and penalties." Pneumanee assured her, that in the most refined societies she would sometimes meet with people who made important histories of their ailings to a painful degree, and treat every body they meet with the same unreserve

unreserve they would their physician, and enter as minutely into their complaints. Charles remembered that the great Condé said, after being in company with a dull man, that had he known there had been two such men in France, he believed he should not have had the courage to return to it. What would he have said to England, had he heard there were more than one such woman? Fanny declared, she should be half afraid to go into the world; there seemed to be so many odd people in it; Charles proposed to have a general censor to correct minor failings, and a monthly report, as well as an agricultural one; and while one informed you of the growth and improvement of your land, the other might glory in the decrease of disagreeable and disgusting habits. "For instance," he said, "snuff-taking decreased in this month, because delicate women no longer

"longer approve the various noises, &c. that it produces; bile happily decreases, because ladies who study anatomy, know the human stomach too well to make it a subject of remark in civilized societies." — "Your own creaking boots," said Fanny, "what would become of them, Charles?" — "True, my dear Fanny," he replied with infinite good humour, "I should be forced to keep out of society till they are worn out; for it will be very long before I get a new pair."

"I advise," said Pneumanee, who entered with great pleasantry into all their conversations, "that you are censors to each other, and use the happy partiality you feel for each other in correcting every possible awkwardness; for habits creep insensibly upon the wisest and best of us all. It gives me real pain," she continued, "to see people who deserve to be loved and respected,

respected, make themselves disgusting and shunned, from some unpleasant habits they have unwarily contracted. Some people drink their tea with an uproar that would cost you some pains to imitate; others rattle their knife and fork at dinner, that it is painful to hear them. Even the universal practice of standing before the fire, to the exclusion of all chance of seeing it for the rest of the company, is a most intolerable habit, and ought never to be allowed in civilized society.—How can a well-bred man dare to do what he would be ashamed to mention?—The most hopeless error is the habit of inattention to those who speak to you, turning your eye from them; or, the moment you have spoken yourself, wandering away without waiting for a reply; or beginning to speak at the same time that the person speaking to you wishes to be heard, as if a premium

mium was offered to you to run fastest in the race. I forbear to mention those vulgar tricks of slopping your tea into the saucer, or upon a lady's dress, spilling your wine upon the table-cloth, or breaking a glass, as you risk the decanter, in knocking them both together as they pass ; and many such things, which never should appear but in the lowest orders of society."—"I am afraid, Pneumanee," said Charles, "I have been guilty of almost all of them."—"But you will not for the future, Charles," she added ; "and I most earnestly recommend to you both, to acquire that sort of attention which is to be happily expressed in the very countenance. Some people appear to derive pleasure from every thing you say, are never impatient to interrupt you, never conceive themselves or their concerns to be more important than yours, and entirely win
your

your esteem by letting you believe that you have made a strong impression upon theirs."—"Ah, Charles," said Fanny, "I will keep a sharp eye upon you, to shew you how much I wish to see you a perfect gentleman; and I am sure much of the character depends upon such things as these."—"Do, dear Fanny," he replied, "and I will be equally severe to you — another Cato, to make you like I know whom, and as unlike some ladies I know, as you are at present."

"Poor Miss Volatiles!" Fanny said, "if they had been so happy as to have had such examples and precepts as she had always basked in, no doubt they would have been warmed into as much affection for their brothers as she felt for hers — but here is Mr. Mowbray, for I see Ponto and Phillis, his best favourites, coming by the window."—"Hey-day, what keeps

keeps you in such a fine day as this? what, no roast beef for breakfast? all tea and trash! what, no desire to walk? —Come, come, my boy, turn out, don't sit chatting with the women. Ha, Madam Pneumanee here! gad so, I don't wonder you listen to her. Were I young and had my wits about me, as I had once, I would listen to her too; and who knows but she would listen to me—that would be more to the purpose, hey boy!" Pneumanee, said, she had just been recommending a polite attention to every body who spoke, and she must practise whatever she preached. "Aye, aye," says he, "you are a cunning baggage, make every body like you, and don't trouble yourself to like them again. But, odd so, I forgot, Madam what-d'ye-call-her, I don't remember her name, at the manor house there—she is coming the short way over the fields

to

to see you : she found the gate by the barn locked—she is too big to get over the stile you know, so I promised to send you with the key." Charles got up in an instant and looked for the key, but it was no where to be found. The Rector had walked out after breakfast, and was supposed to have carried the key with him. But Charles at last applied to the maid, the maid to the boy ; and after various inquiries, it was at last discovered on the nail where it was always hung. The Squire was making his own scenery, where and how this fat lady would dispose of herself—no possibiliy of sitting down, he said, for she was too fat to get up again. After some time they discovered her coming down the cliff leaning upon Charles ; up-started the Squire, he would not take five hundred pounds, he said, to hear how Charlotte's nurse made her

pap

pap as soon as she was born, and what bleak cold day in November Dorothy had her first tooth drawn, and how many cherries they eat in June, and how many plums in July. He and his dogs left the house as the good lady entered it, tired to death, she said, with waiting so long at the stile. She sunk into a large elbow-chair, and throwing her hat down by her side, began an interesting detail of her own domestic management. After telling us that she was once as little as Fanny, and had such roses in her cheeks, she well remembered how much Lord M. used to admire her complexion, and how she felt whenever he did so. A natural transition, and a very rapid one, brought to her recollection the very fine complexions of her three daughters—every body remarked it, and at the last Assize ball a hundred people asked her if she kept

kept them in cotton. Unluckily their maid was very ill, and they could not come; for really they could do nothing for themselves—they were helpless as infants. Some people liked wives who could do nothing; it gives those husbands who like it, the whole management into their own hands. Some people wished to marry their daughters young; she was quite different, she wished them to spend their youth with her. When her poor husband was alive, he chose she should manage every thing; he never would take any trouble; so she was forced to take a great deal. Her daughters were so amiable and accomplished, danced better, played better, and sung better, than any body's daughters; were less extravagant, went to all balls and parties in Town, were come to rusticate in the country, and would be very glad to shew Fanny their ball-dresses, when
the

the numerous parties were gone that she expected at the manor-house. She should hope for a leisure-day after the 17th of next month; before that she had so many engagements, that she knew not how to dispose of her time.

If there had been one moment's intermission, Fanny was prepared to thank her for so much condescension; but the same incessant series of important events took up two hours before she took her leave.

"I hope," said Charles, as soon as she was gone, "that this lady is the only character of the sort to be found in society, I never heard anything so very tiresome."—"We must lament it the more," said Pneumanee, "because she is said to have judgment and veracity upon other subjects; but her whole aim and object in life is to marry her daughters, and her labours and contrivances for the purpose are inconceivable.

inconceivable. No younger brother is ever invited to the house, and no pretty girl ever admitted, but when such people are present who would not be fit admirers for her girls."

"Charles," said Fanny, "I charge you, in the character of my censor, if you ever see any tendency in me to entertain my friends with my own affairs, and be wholly inattentive to theirs, be sure to tell me of it before it becomes habitual to me."

The Rector returned from the christening of a child; upon the road he had seen an old man upwards of eighty, and his wife, many years younger, digging a small plat of potatoes for their winter's support. Upon asking the wife how she came to marry a man so much older than herself? she said, she thought it was more comfortable for one to be young.—Had they any meat to eat with their potatoes?—

Lord

Lord bless him ! no ; she had not seen a bit of meat for many years.—Had she any money to buy some ?—She had not seen one bit of money for many *long years.*—Did she drink tea ?—Twenty more blessings accompanied the assurance, that for many years she had tasted only herb-tea.—Had she no milk ?—Good luck ! no ; the farmers would not sell a drop.—If they offered to buy it, they gave them a little drop, that they may be ashamed to come again. — What have you get, good woman ?—Why, Sir this plat of potatoes, thank God ! and a quartern loaf a week from the parish.—Is that really all ?—Yes, Sir, with good health and good spirits to enjoy it. There was a look of content and enjoyment in the poor creature's face that increased the interest in her situation ; and it was settled to take the first fine day to give new feelings to a cottage that had been

unseen, and grievously neglected, for so many long years.*

Pneumanee was obliged to leave her friends for some time; Charles was to go to Eton before her return; Lucy was to supply Charles's place from the nursery; she was very impatient for his absence, that she might dine in the parlour, and sit up later in the evening. These, and many more such important events, being settled, they retired to their pillows in innocence and peace.

The next morning Pneumanee was gone; the sun shone in the breakfast-room as gaily as before, but not upon her chair as it was wont to do; the birds sung the same sprightly notes, but Pneumanee was not there to hear them; Charles saw, while Fanny remarked this, that the yellow tinge of autumn was changing the verdure of the leaves—some indeed had fallen—

* A fact.

and he believed it would be summer all the year if Pneumanee would never leave them.

The day at last came that Charles was to go to Eton ; Fanny summoned all her resolution, and reflecting how much more his parents would feel than she could possibly do, determined not to add to their concern by the least appearance of grief. Charles received his admired chart, and brought it to Fanny to see : it folded up like a map in a pocket-case : she run her eye over it as quick as the time would allow, and under the article Infidelity, read these beautiful lines : " Think for " yourself, my dear Charles, which was " the nobler views, he who looks for " nothing beyond this short span of " duration, or he whose aims are ex- " tended with the endless length of " eternity ? he who derives his spirit " from

" from the elements, or he who thinks
" it inspired by the Almighty?"

" Oh Charles," said Fanny, " how I envy you such a monitor! This is your Pneumanee; cherish it, and consult it upon all occasions, and be as happy as wisdom and virtue can make you; then we shall rejoice as if you were still with us." Charles smiled; all the children went to the carriage-door, all kissing their dear Charles, and a thousand good-byes echoed round the lawn. The old nurse, who had often pronounced he would be a great man, was now sure of it; and she only grieved that she could not go with him, for who would now air his linen, or see that he changed his clothes after a shower? The Rector, to shorten all these ceremonies, put Charles hastily into the carriage, stepped in after him, and the wood immediately hid them

them from their sight. Fanny felt as if all her enjoyments were at an end ; and while they all slowly returned to the house, she stooped once or twice to gather a flower in the border, and to brush off at the same time a troublesome tear that would fill the corner of her eye. Lucy ran into the hall, and seeing Charles's garden-hat, ran out screaming to Fanny, "Here is poor dear Charles's hat, but we shall not see it upon his head *so long*."—She could say no more for sobbing : this was too much ; for though Fanny knew very well it would be some months before she could see him, she did not expect to hear it expressed with sobs and tears from a dear child who intended to be very glad when he was gone ; but recollecting what pain it would give her mamma to see such weakness, she collected all her firmness, took Lucy out to see the rabbits, and promised her a full

full share of the trouble of feeding and attending them till Charles returned. The sun-shine of Lucy's breast soon returned, and Fanny pursued her daily employments, not without perpetually wishing for dear Charles, but never expressing it.

Few events happened at the Parsonage during Pneumanee's absence: the interesting widow had sent a beautiful work-box to Fanny. "It was new to her," she said, "to have the pleasure of giving; she had found it delightful, and never felt stronger the blessing of the Princess's bounty than at the moment she purchased that trifle, with the hopes of her acceptance; and she trusted she would not send it back.—"Not for the world," Fanny said, "and she wrote a kind note to tell her so; and to many kind expressions of her esteem, added an anxious wish to see her at the Parsonage.

Pneumanee,

Pneumane, who always returned to give new pleasure, and whose joyous air and lovely countenance secured her every where the most cordial and affectionate reception, was now become an essential part of the family. The Rector considered her as a darling child, with a degree of respect which was naturally attached to the superiority of her existence, and the blessed use she made of her power. His wife wanted that sort of master-key for all her purposes. When Pneumane was absent, even her manuscript-book, though written for the express purpose of amusing and improving her family; when her personal advice could be no longer given, was taken up with little pleasure, and went on with a reluctant dulness, till she was again present to inspirit their hours, and give to every scene a brilliant and invigorating character. When she entered.

tered at breakfast-time, "I like this part of the day," she said, "to meet you again; there is something in a breakfast-table so fresh with the new air, so fresh with gratitude for the blessings of the night, and so fresh with hope that all our blessings may be continued through the day, so new in good humour that the occurrences of the day have not yet had the influence to disturb, that I am inclined always to think it the pleasantest part of the day, and the time when I wish to see those friends I like best."—"My dear Pneumanee," said Fanny, "what do you think of a fine summer evening, when every thing around you seems to tranquillize your mind to a sort of heavenly composure; or an autumnal evening like the last, when the harvest waggons fill the lanes, the rustic songs and laughing villagers amuse your mind with ideas of their felicity, while
the

the moon, presiding over the scene, gives a kind of dignified sanction to it that I cannot describe; then the winter evenings, a smiling fire, a charming friend, a pleasant book—can there be any thing in the world more delightful? And we have left out the spring, ‘when Nature clads her universal face with pleasant green, that earth seems like to heaven, a seat where gods might dwell or wander with delight.’” “Oh my dear Fanny,” said Pneumanee, “if you bring Milton to your aid, who can resist you? but what do we both discover but that every season of the year, and every hour, are calculated to suit our tastes, to cheer our spirits, and to raise our hearts to him, by whose gracious disposal all his mighty works have a reference to the pleasure and benefit of his creatures?

Pneumanee looked for Charles, and seeing

seeing Lucy in his place, whose rosy looks gave a promise of health and good humour, she took her by the hand, and welcomed her to the breakfast-table. "That's very good of you, ma'am," Lucy said; "for I believe every body had rather have Charles;" but settling herself busily on her chair, "I intend to put Charles's nose out of joint; nurse says, she is sure I shall in a month."—"My dear Lucy," said her mamma, "some of your nursery ideas must be left there. You are a dear girl, and always ready to oblige, and will of course secure the friendship of all who know you; and we have all affection enough both for you and Charles, you can never interfere with each other." Lucy blushed, but her buoyant spirit rose again, and wriggling on her chair, "I know one thing," she said, "I shall be as good as I can."—"I know that," said Fanny; and very soon

soon she found Lucy behind her chair, putting her arms round her neck, and kissing her for her kindness.

Pneumanee was reminded of her kind practice, of saying how she had spent her absent time. "Certainly," she said; "and though she had lost one pleasing and attentive auditor in Charles, she had gained another in Lucy, who, she was sure, would avoid many little errors and failings to which the very best young people were subject, when she heard them described and condemned by friends she loved and respected so much." Lucy, whose ready blush was as prompt as every amiable quality of her nature, now felt it deeply dyed upon her cheek; she said not a word, and Pneumanee, who saw she was in doubt what she ought to say, immediately began:

"I was earnestly requested to visit a family whom I have long known
and

and valued ; they live a considerable distance from London ; and as the family is large, and the elder branches wish to see a little more of the world than can easily be seen in an old family-mansion, a hundred miles from London, they earnestly pressed their father to spend this winter in the gay world. He is an excellent man, with great peculiarities of manner and thinking ; his whole estate, he says, has been transmitted from father to son in many generations ; he thinks a man a villain who injures his posterity to gratify his passions ; he is but a steward for a few years, and is much more culpable than any other steward who runs away, because the injured are not in the way to run after him. There is a famous family-oracle handed down with all the rent-rolls, that whoever sells the property will live to want it ; and the possessor regularly signs his name, that
he

he has left it entire, and been a faithful steward—a better *title*, the old gentleman says, than any prince could give him. The old family-plate has its share of his veneration: some cups are distinguished as the gifts of great men, in what he calls happier times: huge tankards have had the honour to give to princes of the blood their Christmas ale at that very oak table: the sword hung up in the hall had been used at the battle of Agincourt, and belonged to an ancestor who heard Henry the Fifth speak that very speech that Shakspeare has so beautifully and faithfully recorded. Here was a general laugh.

“ Happy enthusiasm,” the Rector said. “ Exquisitely entertaining,” Pneumanee replied; “ for he had so much fun and laugh with all he said, that you are for ever at a loss to know what he does, and does not believe.

His

His two eldest daughters had all the advantages their mother had the means of giving them : ' He would not have them bred up for the opera, they positively should not exhibit there ; then why qualify them for it ? Neither should they sing upon the stage : let them play and sing well enough to amuse their husbands, and sing their children to sleep in their cradles (when they had any) ; that was quite enough for a woman to do in that way. Then for drawing and such like accomplishments, you could buy a print for a guinea, much better to look at than a lady's performance, that cost her months of health and years of eyesight ; and this to gratify people who know nothing of the matter, and condescended to say, *Very pretty indeed, I really thought it was a print.* I would have my girls,' he continued, ' to be good conversible women ; to read

read and store their minds with useful knowledge ; to know by the precepts and examples of the wisest men and wisest women that went before them, what will make them respected and happy. I would have them able to talk well upon every subject ; better amusement than fiddling, and piping, and squalling fine Italian airs, that, for ought I know, may be very odd language. The misses in these days can do every thing well but talk and think ; their faculties are all employed another way : take away a few fashionable topics from their conversation, and you leave them as dumb as fishes.' After a rhapsody of this sort, that, however strangely expressed, had a world of good meaning, I thought it a most unfavourable time to move our suit, which, we had planned before dinner, should come on with the dessert ; but I saw so much anxiety in the young ladies,

ladies, that I resolved to ask him at once, why he did not spend the next winter in London, to shew the ladies how much they had escaped, and to give them a new relish for the country?—
‘Aye, aye,’ said he, ‘I know they have been priming you, because they think nobody can resist you: no more they can, I believe, if they had not such a family-oracle as I have to guide them. What would become of the family-estate? what of all my plate? one dish would go to an opera, to hear Squaline sing; another for the theatre; some of my spoons, forks, and mugs, be melted for a ball; and my tankard, renowned by a prince of the blood, dissolved into jellies and syllabubs. No, I could sooner part with drops of my own blood: no, London does mighty well for people who have a great deal of money, or for those who have none; for they may try various ways to get some:

some : nobody troubles their head about you ; behave like a gentleman, and who cares whether you eat and drink splendidly, or have only the best part of a dinner, a good appetite ? But for a moderate man to go to London, who has no market there to fill his purse when it is empty, depend upon it, he had better stay and feed his pigs in the country, for he will bring his hogs to a fine market.'—‘ Oh, dear Papa,’ said his eldest daughter, ‘ we will save it out a thousand ways’—‘ in ten thousand,’ said the youngest ; ‘ and my uncle has sent mamma word he would lend her his house for the winter.’—‘ Now, my dear Sir,’ said I, ‘ the chief obstacle is removed.’—‘ And what,’ says he, ‘ will become of my heirs for ever, if I spend all their money ? My steward tells me my house wants a roof ; shall I find a roof in London ? The foundation wants propping ; will

Londen

London do that for me? No no; it will run away with both together, and I shan't have an oak or a foot of timber to mend a waggon. Have not I one son at Oxford, and another at Cambridge, to embrace the learning of both universities; and what will learning do without money? And will not they have children and grand-children for ages to come? and if they all go to London, a fig for the oracle, the estate is gone. Might not this very London visit so act upon circumstances, unseen and unknown by mortal eyes, as to produce a necessity for selling the Agincourt sword, which he would not have go out of his family for all the wealth they have ever had in it — a sword, that not having eyes could not have seen the noble Harry the Fifth, but what in such a case might do as well, it had possibly been seen by him, if it was a moon-light night when

when he surveyed his camp.' " They all laughed, and Fanny said, there could be little hope of subduing the prejudices of such a man, she was afraid the ladies must spend the winter in the country. " Then you will find it difficult to believe that the plan is actually settled; he consented to be downright *stripped*, as he called it, to spend three winter months in Town, to sell every thing but his estate, his tankards, and his sword to gratify them. " Really!" said Fanny. " O no; not really," Pneumanee said; " for he was a very rich man, and felt a pleasure in talking of poverty, to have the pleasant power of recollecting that he had no chance of ever feeling it. The dear girls could not sufficiently express their joy; they thanked him a thousand times, ran about the room, then up to the glass, to see how fit they were to appear in London; then talked

talked of caps, and hats, and pelisses ; would have me to go up to their drawers, to see if their things were in proper fashion ; tried on many to see if they were becoming ; and obtained their father's consent to anticipate a quarter of their annual allowance to make necessary preparations for this important journey. Never were two girls more delighted."—"I anxiously hope," said Fanny ; "that all their expectations may be realized."—"I have engaged to meet them on their first arrival," said Pneumance ; "I shall enjoy seeing their surprise at the novelty of the scene, and will enter into their joys as cordially as they can wish. Before they went to bed, they were cleaning gloves, selecting ribbons, and holding up their heads, with anxious solicitude, to be fit subjects for the beau-monde.

"The

"The next morning all was joy and bustle, though there was nothing particular to do. The good master of the house recollect ed that his family-coach was very old and very heavy, the horses not much younger than the carriage, and one of them had shewn awkward symptoms of lameness when they were last used to go to church. 'Oh,' the girls said, 'they would save them after to-morrow, when they wanted to go to the next town, seven miles off; after that they would only pay one visit a piece to all their neighbours; and then they instantly sprung from their chairs to put P. P. C. upon their cards.'—'My poor heirs!' said their father, 'I may as well P. P. C. upon my estate.'—'Dear papa, do not think more of your distant heirs, who may never come, than of your children who are ready here.'—'Now I warrant you,' he said, 'you both expect to

get husbands in London ; but it is not the place, girls; depend upon it, it is not the place ; all bustle and hurry, a man has no time to think of love, a woman has no time to hear it; all dress, and show, and parade, and nonsense !' The girls blushed exceedingly at the suspicions implied in the first part of the speech, and did not give full credit to the last. ' Dear simple girls ! the very word husband, mentioned so carelessly, gave them pain ; perhaps after their London visit, such a conversation may not produce exactly the same effect.' Fanny and Lucy appeared equally surprised at this last remark from Pneumanee, and said, they had never heard such a subject mentioned ? " Did young ladies really ever talk of getting husbands ?" — " O yes," Pneumanee said, " and would laugh amazingly to hear of a young lady's asking such a question." " If

"If you had been in such habits," she added; "if I was to hear such frivolous nonsense at your tea-table, and by your fire-side, as is too often the amusement of many that I frequent, I should never have chosen you, my dear Fanny, for my particular friend. It is your correctness of thinking and acting, the natural energy of your character, so judiciously trained to all that is right and good; your taste in reading, your cheerful and cordial interest and affection for all your family, and the active pleasure you take in all its domestic arrangements, that has won my most sincere and cordial affection."—"Then I am happy indeed," said Fanny; "and I trust I shall never forfeit a blessing I shall be most industrious to preserve."

The Rector and his wife were delighted; Fanny thanked them for the care and instruction that qualified her

for such a distinction, and they embraced her warmly. "Kiss me too, Fanny," said Lucy; "for I love you as well as any body does." They smiled as the artless girl ran to them all with an eager embrace; her young heart was delighted with the scene, and she had no other means of expressing her pleasure.

"I left the family," Pneumanee said (after many solicitations to continue the history of her visits), "very happy in charming preparations for their journey; and called at my friends who had such an unexpected fortune left them last year."—"I remember," said Fanny, "the lady who delighted in dusting her furniture."—"Yes," she replied, "and who is still as fond of dusting it as ever; I met her running across the passage with something so weighty that she could hardly support it. 'The front of a highly polished grate,

grate,' she told me, ' which, as they should soon want fires, she was wrapping up for the winter: the grate cost two-and-twenty guineas, and it would be a great pity to let it rust.' The breakfast-room had a great many additional ornaments; I was told the high price of every thing in it; could I guess what those screens cost? they really had the conscience to ask nine guineas for the pair, but they were bought at the dearest shop in London.—The lamp suspended from the ceiling, the rich sofas, the very expensive glasses, were all subjects offered for my admiration; I had a peep through several coverings and papers at the extravagant chairs, and I was to see, in the bill lately sent in, the exact catalogue of all the costs. I thanked my friend; but as I was not immediately going to furnish a house, the fashions and prices would probably

change before I wanted to study them.

"The Squire now came in from the stable, where all was in the wrong; the horses, the grooms, the oats, *all* were in the wrong—cost so much, and answered so little to the comfort of the establishment, that I sincerely lamented my friends had ever emerged from a simple style of humbler life.

"Did I know," continued Pneumancee, "any body who wanted a house so completely furnished? for now they had nothing more to do, they wished to part with it, to have the delight all over again by furnishing a house some where else; 'for, to tell you the truth,' said the lady, 'we do not like this neighbourhood; none of the people visit us, and it is a slight we do not understand, unless some injurious and false reports have been

been spread to our disadvantage.'—
‘That,’ I said, ‘must be impossible; but it was very natural when strangers came to a neighbourhood; that the inhabitants should wait to know if their habits and manners were suited to their own, before they indiscriminately visited them.’—‘Very natural,’ she said, ‘and the neighbourhood did wait some time, and paid one visit, but had never repeated it.’—‘That,’ I said, ‘was indeed unaccountable’—‘because,’ she replied, ‘we were so exact, that we kept a book of the days on which every visit was paid from the time we came, and returned every one after just as many days as they were in paying it.’ It was my painful duty,” said Pneumance, “to convince her that she knew not the customs of fashionable life; that it was an invariable custom to return the first visit the next day, if possible; but certainly the day

day after, with proper apologies for the delay."—"Is it really so," said Fanny; "as you have always told me, that good breeding was founded upon good sense and great comfort, I shall wish to know the reasons for such a custom."—"It is sufficient for the practice that it *is* the custom," said Pneumane ; "for if the upper ranks of society find you are unacquainted with the habits and customs by which they are governed, they naturally conclude that you could neither be agreeable to each other, and leave you to associate with those whose practice will assimilate with your own. The lady said, 'They were going to purchase a very large house in Wiltshire, and then they should know better. 'How you would have laughed, yesterday!' she went on to say, 'if you had seen a tradesman's wife, when I shewed her the whole house and all the furniture! she

she did lift up her hands and eyes at all she saw and all she heard ; such a thing would be a fortune for one of her sons ! The music-room quite astonished her ; that an organ had cost two hundred guineas, she could scarcely conceive : she begged me to favour her with a tune, and when I assured her I knew not a note, she actually asked me what I wanted it for ?— ‘ A natural question, poor woman ! ’ I said. ‘ Yes,’ she replied, and the poor woman wished her Sally had such a thing for her fortune, as she would then be married to a very deserving man who wanted a small sum to set him up in business.’—‘ And you gave it her,’ said I eagerly (meaning to restore her at once to my good opinion).—‘ Oh no,’ she said ; ‘ she was not such a fool as to expect *that* ; but I believe, when I shewed her the quantity of clothes I had made up last year,

year, and told her this neighbourhood gave me no opportunity to wear them, and they would all be too old-fashioned to wear when I went to Town, I believe she did expect I would give her some of *them*; for she looked rather disappointed when I shut the wardrobe, and said in a piteous tone, ‘What a blessing it must be to have more than enough!—‘ And did not you tell her,’ said I, ‘that the degree of blessing would depend upon the use you made of your abundance?’—‘No,’ she said, ‘I thought it a pity to mortify the poor thing; so I told her all that it cost, to convince her how much it was all out of her reach.’—‘Poor woman!’ I repeated, ‘what could convince her of the insufficiency of wealth to make her happy.’—‘Nothing but the possession,’ she replied. There was so much good sense and feeling in the remark, that I seized the moment

ment of its utterance, and said, ‘ Come try the experiment upon her, send her a hundred pounds for her daughter’s portion ; it will give you more pleasure than any purchase you have ever made ; you will secure the gratitude of a whole family, the prayers and blessing of a young couple, who will teach their infants to lisp your name with joy ; and the time must come when you would rather reflect upon such an act than perhaps any other of the whole year.

‘ Very true, my dear madam,’ she replied ; ‘ and I assure you I have not forgotten how I should have liked such a present myself, when I was young in the world, and there is nothing I should like to do better ; but I must tell you, that the purchase of the large estate I mentioned to you will be be eighty thousand pounds, and you know that is a great sum ! ’—‘ Great indeed.’

indeed,' I replied ;' and in such a sum, how little appears a small hundred !'

—' Every little helped,' she said ; ' and as she used to have five hundred a year for her trifling expenses, now economy was the order of the day, she was to have but three.' I was very sorry she lost such an opportunity of communicating happiness, because it met its immediate and lasting reward ; but as I had a friend, who would immediately upon my application send the young woman the sum I should request, I would only ask her for a couple of her gowns of last year, that would be so old-fashioned before the spring.'—' That is true,' she said, ' they would make nice wedding-clothes for the girl ; but now I recollect, my maid can be taught to alter them to any fashion, and I shall want all my present income for trinkets and baubles, which if one does not want,

one can never see without buying, they are so pretty. You have never seen my jewel-box,' she added; ' it is quite beautiful ; they make things in these days with so much taste ; it is nobly and splendidly filled.'—I said, ' I had so little taste for splendour, that I should greatly undervalue it.'—Oh, she could tell me all the prices.'—' But I was too apt,' I said, ' to rate things according to their usefulness, and not their price.' I am afraid I said this out of my usual manner, for she immediately reverted to the subject of the girl, and said, ' Another time she should be happy to oblige her.' — I thanked her, hoped the young creature never meant to be married another time, and took my leave." — " Why, my dear Pneumanee," said Fanny, " did you not tell her, as I trust you would me, that she was going on very ill ? she will be wretched." — " Such is
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the seducing influence of wealth, my dear Fanny, and such the power it acquires over the human mind, that where it once gets the ascendancy, it diffuses itself over every thought and action of the heart; and while the selfish possessor details the high proofs of their seeming munificence, they but display the frivolous weakness of their own illiberal feelings. I considered my time and attention as quite lost, and left her deeply lamenting that she had ever increased her once quiet and comfortable income."—"Poor lady," said Lucy, "how greatly I pity her!" "I hope," said Fanny, "if wealth would corrupt my heart, that I shall ever be poor: but where did you go next, my dear Pneumanee?"—"To see how my good friend went on with her little grand-child, and its most unpleasant father. I endeavoured by the way to reconcile myself to him; he must have

have some amiable points of character, or how could he engage the affections of such a girl, and how induce her to keep the secret of his attachment from her affectionate parents? He had his infant in his arms when I entered the room, tossing it high enough to frighten us all. Every voice remonstrated upon the danger, but that seemed to increase both his strength and spirit to proceed, and he very nearly let the little creature fall to the ground. The mother screamed, I caught it in my arms; he was tired of the exertion; but lest it should have the air of a defeat, I heard him say, as I ran with it out of the room, that he should so exercise it every day; that it should have no womanly fears, and be as much like a boy as possible. He went on to say, he would give fifty guineas to have it a boy. Every body must allow that one boy was worth a dozen girls; he rose upon himself, and

and was soon convinced that one boy was worth a thousand girls! and as girls sunk to nothing, boys gradually rose in his estimation, and he swore he would give the whole world if his minx had been a boy! The father said, in a mild and soothing tone of voice, that "a girl had constituted the chief happiness of *his* life ever since she was born." His daughter deeply blushed, and felt how bitterly she had destroyed that happiness. To put an end to reflections so uneasy to us all, I asked this inconsiderate man, if he had been staying there ever since I had seen him?—Yes, he said, he had done all he could to relieve its dulness; he had been shooting, riding, and watching the weather-cock; but he was not formed for a country-life; he wondered old dad made it out so well: for his part, he could not live just to walk in fields, to see how turnips grew, and to get an appetite, and go to bed to get

get up and see it all over and over again. ‘It’s vegetation and not life: isn’t it so, hey?’ turning to me. I said; ‘People must have resources in themselves, a sort of aptitude to enjoy, and then they never found any thing dull, especially where a good library and good society were always to be had.’—‘Books I hate,’ he replied; ‘and for society, I think country gentlemen the dullest fellows in the world, and country ladies worse.’

“There was a melancholy dignity in the air of his wife when she said; ‘My dear Pneumanee, you have seen this house when such a description would not have suited it.’—‘Nor does it now,’ I said; ‘neither you nor your husband could ever make me believe, that with such a father and mother and such a lovely child, with such elegance and plenty around you, it is possible ever to feel any thing like dulness.’—

‘Aye

'Aye, but how long is it to last?' he rudely said; 'here's dad sixty-two; his grand climacteric is next year: ten to one but he trips off then; I would not ensure his life for sixpence; it is not worth six months' purchase: then all goes to sixes and sevens, granny's jointure won't keep up this state—must come to a crust at last—tell us truth, my old buck, have you saved enough to keep us from starving?' We all looked down with astonishment. The old gentleman, who seemed to allow any thing to be said, rather than risk giving his daughter pain, mildly said, 'The day may not be far off when you may know more of these truths than I am now willing to reveal,' and walked with a slow pensive air out of the room. His daughter soon after followed; and when her mother and I went to the nursery, we found her silent and mournful, the very image

image of woe. I took her by the hand, and she burst into tears. ‘I knew not the way to happiness,’ she said, while her mother was withdrawn; ‘I could have borne to lose my own, if I had not sacrificed my dear parents’ entire comfort.’—‘You have a hard part to act,’ I replied; ‘and never having been accustomed to difficulties, are not prepared to meet them.’—‘You know,’ she said, ‘the greatest affronts imaginable are such as nobody can take notice of; and I know my mother affects not to feel it, because she would save me the misery I perpetually feel, for having brought such a son into their family, and my dear father is every moment wounded deeply.’—‘I advised her to be gay and cheerful, to endeavour to turn all his oddities into pleasantries; and by laughing with him, she might gain something of an ascendancy that might in time regulate his conduct.’—

‘Oh,

'Oh, you know,' she said, 'that the want of manners in the concerns of life is more prejudicial than a deficiency of talents.'—'But we must now do the best we can; do not appear disconcerted, but laugh it off.'—'What, when my dear father is grieving under his unguarded folly, and my mother in torture?'—'It is a hard task, I allow; but nothing will lighten the burden to them so much as seeing you bear it lightly.' She wiped her eyes, looked in the glass, in hopes that no redness was left round them; but the very appearance of her dejected look made a fresh gush increase all the difficulty: she kissed her little girl, and we took a walk through the shrubbery, till we were called to dinner, where a hundred good resolutions were prepared of the most gay and gratifying nature. Soon after we were seated at dinner, he began: 'I mean to sell Pet
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for a good round sum ; many a married couple who have no children will bid up high for such a healthy puss ; we must take care, however, that no Salique law comes in the way, no cutting females out of estates, hey ! We have had enough of that already, hey wife ? The idea of selling her child had taken every shade of colour from its poor mother's face ; but the indelicate reflection upon her ancestors returned it with a deeper dye : recollecting herself with admirable presence of mind, she said, ' Oh yes, by all means sell her ; shall I carry her about as a gipsy, and see who will bid most for her ? ' I recollected a whimsical story, that I hoped would divert the conversation into other channels ; but as if he was willing to shew how much he had the power of tormenting the family, he said, ' Gipsy ! that's a good thought ; I know a gipsy that will bring her up completely

completely for the purpose ; she will educate her, and teach her to run barefoot by the side of a carriage better than you can do ; and the sooner she begins the better.' Every idea of cheerfulness disappeared, every body dreaded the possibility of his being really in earnest ; he added, as if he really was so, 'It will be some thing to save shoes and stockings.' His poor wife, forgetful of all her heroic plans formed in the shrubbery, soon left the room.

"I will tire you no longer," Pneumancee said, "with the unfeeling conduct of such a man ; I wish he was the only one of the kind I had ever met with."—"Oh," said Fanny, "what what would become of me if I were married to such a man ! What great risks ladies run who marry upon a short acquaintance."—"But tyranny is not confined to the gentlemen," said Pneumancee ; "I know many ladies who

who make a barbarous use of the ascendancy they have gained over their husbands. One lady, who has a most excellent and highly accomplished gentleman, appears to say and do every thing that will give him pain. When he suggests that the children are sitting up an hour beyond their usual bed-time, it is her immediate choice that for that night they shall stay up as long as she does: when he says they look pale, never was such a mistake, they have more than usual roses in their cheeks, and the freshest glow of health in their appearance: when he proposes they should go to school, she has just determined they shall have a governess at home: when he observes his boy looks plump and healthy, he is the worst judge of health in the world, for the child has been taking preparatory medicines, and is actually now going into a regular course of physic:

physic: if he, with kind assiduity, brings her a chair, she wishes to sit in one with arms; if he happens to bring an arm-chair first, he has done so, because he knows she is cramp't to death in an arm-chair: if he brings her a foot-stool, as he seems to delight in anticipating her wants, he must have seen that she was that moment going to lie upon the sofa: when he sends her a glass of champaigne at dinner, he does it to vex her; for he well knows it would downright kill her: if he happens to omit asking her, it is most unkind; for he as well knows she can sometimes venture to try it."—"Oh," said Lucy, eagerly, "how heartily her husband must hate her!"—"That's a strong expression, my dear Lucy," Pneumanee said; "and though very fashionable, for in these days every thing is either detestable and to be hated, or angelic and to be loved with ardour; yet I could

could wish that a character so pliant and amiable as yours should never convey the idea of a fierce or violent woman, or even an ardent one; remember, ‘For softness she and sweet attractive grace;’ and when I hear a lady say, a dear man, a delightful man, and sometimes a charming man, I am as much pained at the energy of her character and manner, as if she, in the same fashionable style, used the expressions of inordinately frightful, fearfully disgusting, or hideously alarming: a young lady never studies her own interest so much, as when she corrects all her inclinations to express herself so strongly. Every thing from a young and pretty mouth should be gentle and graceful.

“I am quite ashamed,” said Lucy, blushing, “to have expressed myself so harshly. I am afraid,” she added, “that the lady was not very fond of her husband, elegant and good as you describe him.” — “She thought she was,

was, I believe," said Pneumanee ; " for if he was going out in a warm day without his hat, she was sure he was going to get cold ; and tormented him extremely, by copying the solicitude of a real affectionate wife, who makes it her study to consult her husband's comfort in preference to her own."

" Are there many such wives to be found ? " said Fanny, artlessly. " I hope not, my dear ; but I assure you the picture I have drawn is from the life, and moderately coloured : for I have heard her call to her husband in company, by his Christian name, to snuff the candles, pick up her gloves, or fetch her shawl, in a tone and manner that left every body in doubt whether it was the husband or footman that was so peremptorily ordered."

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